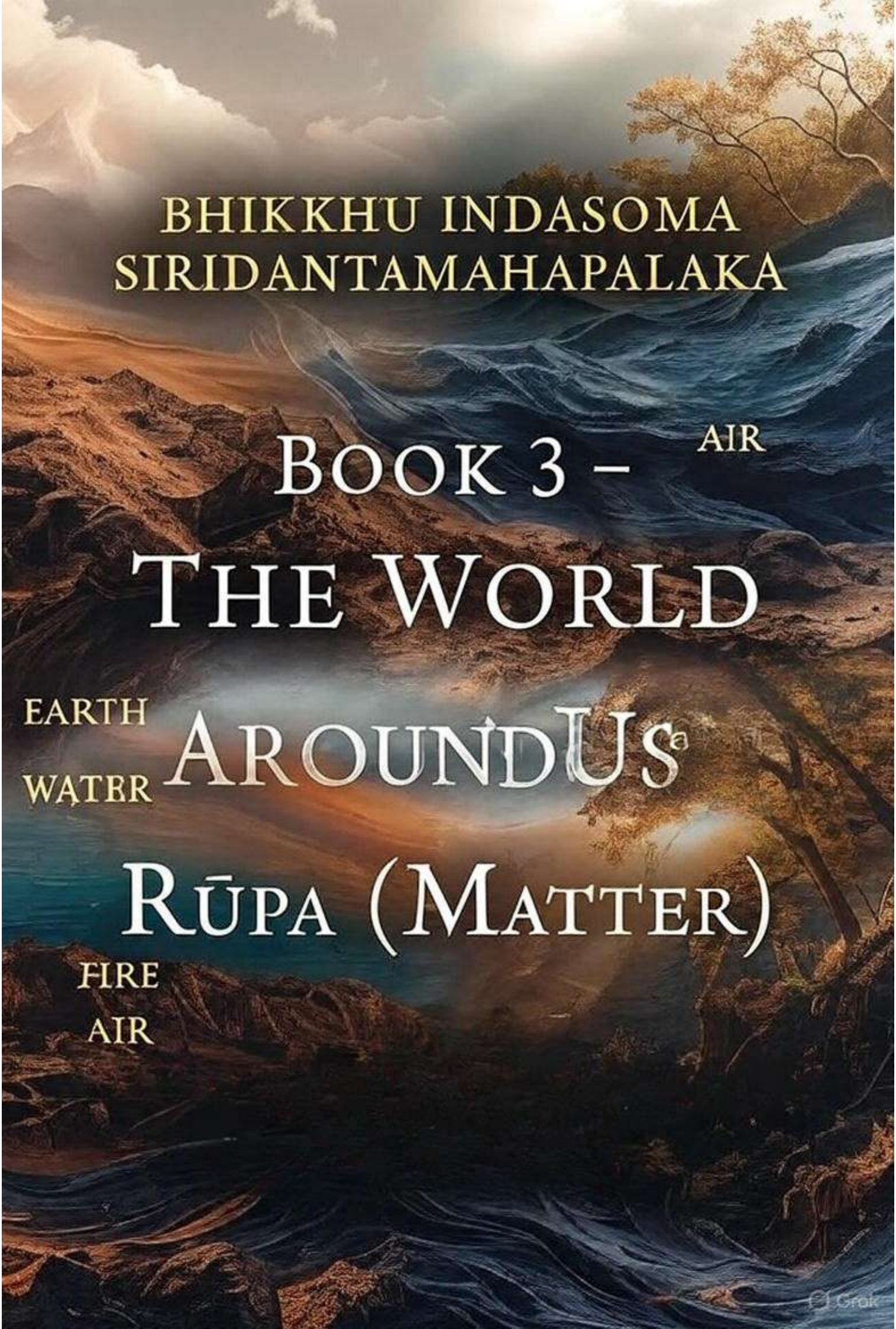
BHIKKHU INDASOMA
SIRIDANTAMAHAPALAKA
BOOK 3 –
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RŪPA (MATTER)
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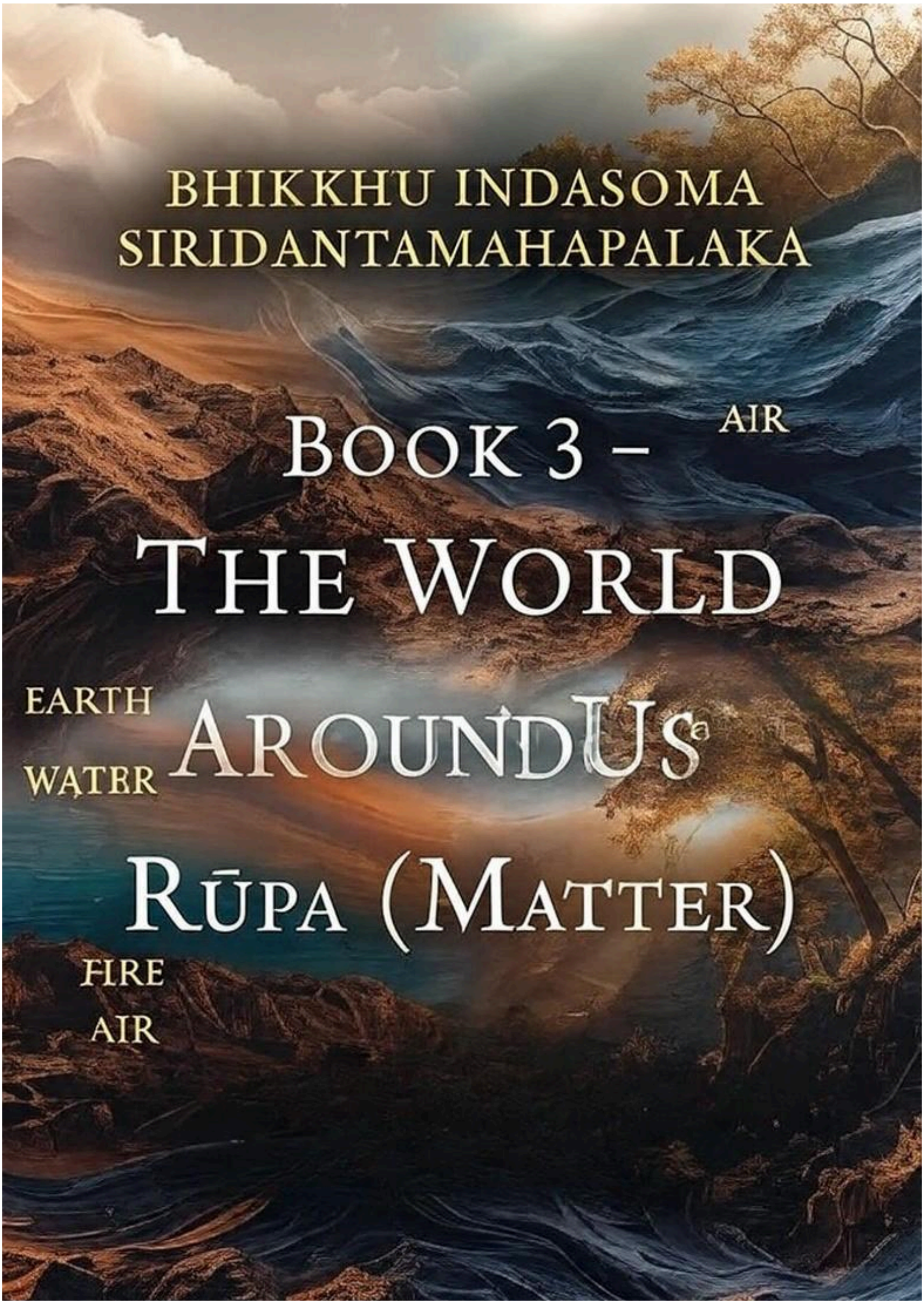
AIR

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)



By Bhikkhu Indasoma Siridantamahapalaka

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The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

Mind Science and compass for Everyday Life: Navigating Mind, Matter, and Liberation

Book 3 of the series: Introduction to Buddhist Abhidhamma for Beginners

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Dedication

May this small book be a light for beginners on the path of wisdom.
May all who read it understand their own mind, live kindly, and see truth clearly.
May this work honor the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha.

Mind Science and compass for Everyday Life: Navigating Mind, Matter, and Liberation

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

By ***Bhikkhu Indasoma Siridantamahapalaka***

ORCID iD: 0009-0000-0697-4760

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

ဝန္ဒနာ

နမော တဿ ဘဂဝတော အရဟတော သမ္မာသမ္ဗုဒ္ဓဿ။

ဗုဒ္ဓဿ ဒန္တဓာတုယော မဟာသရီရဓာတုယော ဝန္ဒနံ ကရောမိ ၊ ဗုဒ္ဓဿ ဒန္တဓာတုယော ဥဘတော ဟတ္ထေ ဓာရေန္တော ပသန္နစိတ္တော၊သက္ကစ္စံ ပူဇံ ကရောမိ၊ ဂရုကရောန္တော နမာမိ။

ဣမာ ဗုဒ္ဓဿ ဒန္တဓာတုယော သဒ္ဓါ-ပသာဒေန ပူဇေမိ၊ အဓိဋ္ဌာန-ပရမိယာ လဒ္ဓါ၊မယာ ရက္ခိတာ သုပ္ပတိဋ္ဌိတာ။

ဣမာ ဓာတုယော ဣဓ ပတိဋ္ဌိတာ သွာဂတ နာမ ဝိဟာရေ၊

တာသံ ရက္ခဏ-ဂေါပန-ပရိဟာရ-ကရဏံ ၊ မယာ ဘိက္ခု ဓမ္မသာမိ သိရိဒန္တမဟပါလက နာမ

သက္ကစ္စံ ပဝတ္တတိ။

ယာ ဒိသာ လောကဓာတူသု ၊ ဗုဒ္ဓါနုဘာဝေန ဇောတန္တိ၊ တာဒိသေန အနုဘာဝေန

ဣမာ ဓာတုယော သုပ္ပရိဂ္ဂဟိတာ ဟောန္တု။

သဗ္ဗန္တရာယာ ဝူပသမ္မန္တု ၊ သဗ္ဗုပဒ္ဒဝါ န ဘဝန္တု၊ ကာယိကာ စေတသိကာ ရောဂါ ဝူပသမ္မန္တု၊

ကမ္မံ ဣဒံ အနဝဇ္ဇံ နိဋ္ဌံ ဂစ္ဆတု။

ဣမဿ ပုညကမ္မဿ ဖလေန၊ ဣမိဿာ ဒန္တဓာတုပူဇနာယ အာနိသံသေန၊ အာယု ဝဏ္ဏော သုခံ ဗလံ ပညာ စ ၊ မယ္ဟံ စ သဗ္ဗေသံ စ သတ္တာနံ ဝမုန္တု၊ သမ္မာ သမ္ဗဇ္ဇန္တု။

အန္တော အန္တော သတတံ ရက္ခာ၊ ဗာဟိရံ သဗ္ဗယောဂ-ဝူပသမော ဟောတု။

ဓမ္မော ဟဝေ ရက္ခတိ ဓမ္မစာရိံ ၊ ဣတိ ဒန္တဓာတုယော နမဿာမိ။

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa.

Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi. Dhammaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi. Saṅghaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi.

Abhidhammassa garuṁ katvā, Buddhasāsanassa hitāya sukhāya ca,

imaṁ navakoṭṭhāsa-abhidhammaganthaṁ sampādetuṁ paṭipajjāmi.

Sabbantarāyavinodanatthaṁ, sabbupaddavavupasamanatthaṁ,

kalyāṇamittānaṁ anuggahena, pīṇitacittena kataññutāya ca,

kammantaṁ idha suciṇṇaṁ hotu.

Yaṁ kiñci dosaṁ uppajjeyya, taṁ khamantu sabbe satthariyā.

Puññañca mayaṁ pasavāma, taṁ sabbasattānaṁ hitāya saṅvibhajāma.

Imassa kammassa puññaphalena,

āvuso, ayaṁ navakaṇḍa-abhidhammasarīso

aniṭṭhārahaṁ anāvikaraṇaṁ anupaddavaṁ

sampatti-paripūrakaraṇaṁ ca hotu.

Dhammo have rakkhati dhammacāriṁ (dhp-aṭṭhakathā niddesaṃ);

sabbītiyā sabbayogā ca vūpasammantu.

Sukhaṁ hotu kalyāṇaṁ, kiccassa niṭṭhānaṁ sukhato nipphattu,

anāmayena, averena, abyābajjhena.

Bhikkhu Dhammasami @ Bhikkhu Indasoma Siridantamahapalaka

The Author

The office of Siridantamahapalaka

The Hswagata Buddha Tooth Relics Preservation Museum,Myanmar.

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

နမော တဿ ဘဂဝတော အရဟတော သမ္မာသမ္ဗုဒ္ဓဿ။

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အဘိဓမ္မဿ ဂရုံ ကတ္တာ၊ ဗုဒ္ဓသာသနဿ ဟိတာယ သုခါယ စ၊
ဣမံ နဝကောဋ္ဌာသ-အဘိဓမ္မဂြန္ထံ သမ္ဟာဒေတုံ ပဋိပဇ္ဇာမိ။

သဗ္ဗန္တရာယဝိနောဒနတ္ထံ၊ သဗ္ဗုပဒ္ဒဝဝူပသမနတ္ထံ၊
ကလျာဏမိတ္တာနံ အနုဂ္ဂဟေန၊ ပီဏိတစိတ္တေန ကတညုတာယ စ၊
ကမ္မန္တံ ဣဓ သုစိဏ္ဏံ ဟောတု။

ယံ ကိဉ္စိ ဒေါသံ ဥပ္ပဇ္ဇေယျ၊ တံ ခမန္တု သဗ္ဗေ သတ္ထာရိယာ
ပုဉ္ဉဝ မယံ ပသဝါမ၊ တံ သဗ္ဗသတ္တာနံ ဟိတာယ သင်္ဂီဘဏမ
ဣမသ္မာ ကမ္မသ္မာ ပုဉ္ညဖလေန၊
အာဝုသော၊ အယံ နဝကထ္ထ-အဘိဓမ္မသရသော
အနိဋ္ဌာရဟံ အနာဝိကရဏံ အနုပဒ္ဒဝံ
သမ္ပတ္တိ-ပရိပ္ပူရကရဏံ စ ဟောတု။

ဓမ္မော ဟဝေ ရက္ခတိ ဓမ္မစာရိံ ၊
သဗ္ဗီတိယာ သဗ္ဗယောဂါ စ ဝူပသမ္မန္တု။

သုခံ ဟောတု ကလျာဏံ၊ ကိစ္စဿ နိဋ္ဌာနံ သုခတော နိပ္ဖတ္တု၊
အနာမယေန၊ အဝေရေန၊ အဗျာဗဇ္ဈေန။

ဘိက္ခု ဓမ္မသမိ @ ဘိက္ခု ဣန္ဒသောမ သိရိဒန္တမဟာပါလက

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Mind Science and compass for Everyday Life: Navigating Mind, Matter, and Liberation

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

By

Bhikkhu Indasoma Siridantamahapalaka

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The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

Dedication

This third book is dedicated to everyone who has ever wondered,
*"**What am I really made of?***
Is it just this body, these clothes, this face in the mirror?"

To young students, meditators, and readers
*who wish to see not only the **mind (Citta)**,*
*but also the **world of matter (Rūpa)***
more clearly and more wisely.

To our parents and teachers
who care for our bodies with food, medicine, and safety,
and also care for our hearts with Dhamma guidance.

To the noble Buddha,
who taught that all things we call "body" and "world"
*can be understood as **small conditioned phenomena**,*
arising and passing away,
not a lasting self.

*May this book help you see your body not as something to be proud of or ashamed of, but as **Rūpa (matter)**,arising from causes and conditions,changing moment by moment.*

May this understanding bring less clinging, more wisdom, and a lighter heart.

May all who read this
be healthy in body,
peaceful in mind,
and free in heart. 🌿

— Bhikkhu Indasoma Siridantamahapalaka

Acknowledgments

Gratitude is extended to:

- ***Mogok Sayadawgyi's lineage**, whose cycle diagrams inspired this teaching method.*

- ***Dr. Sīlānanda**, **Dr. Mehm Tin Mon**, and **Ashin Janakābhivaṁsa**, whose works on Abhidhamma in daily life serve as doctrinal anchors.*

- *The learners, teachers, and colleagues who piloted classroom drills and feedback exercises that shaped the "Practice Packs" in this volume.*

Who This Book Is For

- *Students of Abhidhamma who want precise, practical diagnosis of live moments.*

- *Meditation teachers needing lawful language for urge-driven episodes (vedanā → taṇhā pivot) without hand-waving.*

- *Researchers building bridges between cognitive science framing and classical conditional analysis.*

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Synopsis:

This book explores *Rūpa*, the material part of existence — the body, the senses, and the world we see, hear, and touch. It explains how matter arises from four great elements — earth, water, fire, and air — and how mind and matter depend on each other. Through simple comparisons and body-based awareness, readers learn to see the body and physical world as changing, momentary, and not “mine.”

Learning Outcome:

You will gain a scientific yet peaceful way of seeing the body — understanding it as nature, not self. This prepares you for mindful awareness of sensations and detachment from clinging to physical forms.

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

Abstract

The third volume examines *Rūpa*, the material component of existence. It explains how matter arises through four great elements—solidity (earth), cohesion (water), temperature (fire), and motion (air)—and their derived forms such as the senses, gender, and life faculty. The book describes the interaction between mind and matter, showing how mental activity conditions physical phenomena and vice versa. Through accessible examples, readers learn to see the body as a natural process, not as self or possession. This volume provides a clear understanding of Buddhist material science and offers a meditative perspective on physical existence as impermanent and dependently arisen.

May this volume help you see moments as moments—clearly, kindly, and to liberating effect.

With Respect

The Author

Sao Dhammasami

Bhikkhu Indasoma Siridantamahapalaka (Pen Name)

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

Homage

Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Fully Enlightened One.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

If the explanations in this book are clear and easy to understand, the credit belongs entirely to my revered Teachers, whose guidance and instruction have been my compass.

If errors remain, or if improvements are needed, they arise from my own limitations alone.

I respectfully invite the most senior members of the Saṅgha, as well as learned elders and fellow practitioners, to offer their feedback, corrections, and guidance should they find mistakes or shortcomings in this work.

— *Bhikkhu Indasoma Siridantamahapalaka*

DIGITAL ACCESS NOTE

*To support learning and integration, this volume is accompanied by **downloadable prompt cards and visual aids**. These resources are designed for classroom use, personal study, and practice integration.*

*Readers are encouraged to **scan the QR code below** to download, print, and use these materials as supportive companions to the text.*

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Foreword

In the first two books of this series, we looked "inside" the mind:

- **Book 1** explored **Citta (consciousness)** – the knowing moment.

- **Book 2** explored **Cetasikā (mental factors)** – the many qualities that color each Citta.

Now, in **Book 3**, we turn toward the **other side of experience**:

Rūpa (matter) – the world of body and material things.

The **Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha**, as explained in *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, divides reality into four ultimate types:
consciousness (Citta), mental factors (Cetasikā), matter (Rūpa), and Nibbāna.

This book focuses on **Rūpa**:

- how Abhidhamma explains the **material side** of life,

- how our **body** and the **outside world** can be seen as **groups of tiny phenomena**,

- and how this understanding can help us hold the body **more wisely and gently**.

According to the Abhidhamma, **matter (Rūpa)** is analyzed into **28 kinds of material phenomena**.

These include:

- the **four great essentials (Mahā-bhūta)** –
  earth, water, fire, air elements;

- and **24 derived forms** that depend on these essentials,
  such as the **sense organs, visible form, sound, life faculty, nutriment**, and so on.

They arise from **four main causes**:

1. **Kamma** (past intentional action)

2. **Citta** (present consciousness)

3. **Utu** (temperature)

4. **Āhāra** (nutriment, food)

Of course, this can sound very technical. The purpose of this beginner's book is to **make it simple and alive**:

- You will meet the **four great elements** through **everyday examples** like lifting a bag, drinking water, feeling warmth, or moving in the wind.

- You will see how the **sense organs** and **sense objects** are explained as different types of **Rūpa**.

- You will learn that this body and the whole world are just combinations of **mind and matter working together**.

The aim is not to turn you into a scientist of atoms,
but to help you see that:

> What we proudly call "my body,"
> and what we fear as "my pain" or "my change,"
> are actually **changing Rūpa**,
> not a solid, permanent "me."

When this is understood slowly and gently, attachment to the body becomes **lighter**, and kindness toward the body can become **wiser**.

May this third book support you in seeing both **mind and matter** more clearly, and in moving one step close to true peace and freedom. 🌿

Sao Dhammasami

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The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

Preface

This **third book** in the series
"Introduction to Buddhist Abhidhamma for Beginners"
is devoted to **Rūpa (matter)** –
the material aspect of experience.

The **Abhidhamma** explains that what we call "a person"
is really a changing combination of:

- **Citta (mind, consciousness)**,
- **Cetasikā (mental factors)**,
- **Rūpa (matter)**,
- and the unconditioned **Nibbāna**.

In **Book 1**, we focused on **Citta**.
In **Book 2**, we explored **Cetasikā**.
Now, in **Book 3**, we look closely at **Rūpa** –
especially as explained in the **"Compendium of Matter" (Rūpasaṅgaha)**
of the *Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha* and its guide.

The traditional teaching, summarized in
A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma, Chapter VI,
explains that:

- All **material phenomena** can be grouped into **28 kinds**.
- These are split into:
    - **Four great essentials (Mahā-bhūta)** –
      earth, water, fire, air elements;

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- **Twenty-four derived forms (Upādāya-rūpa)** –
  such as the **five sense organs**, **sense objects**, **heart-base**, **life faculty**, **nutriment**, **space**, and others.

The book also shows:

- **How Rūpa is classified** in different ways (internal/external, gross/subtle, etc.).
- **How Rūpa arises** from four causes: **kamma, consciousness, temperature, and nutriment**.
- **How Rūpa occurs in life**, in different planes and at different stages.

In this beginner-friendly book,
we follow the same structure in spirit, but with:

- **Very simple language**
- **Short Pāli words with English meaning in brackets**
  (like “Rūpa (matter)” or “Paṭhavī-dhātu (earth element)”)
- **Everyday examples**,
  such as:
  - carrying a backpack (hardness, weight),
  - feeling heat from a laptop,
  - tasting food,
  - seeing a screen,
  - hearing music.

We will **not** try to cover every technical detail.
Instead, we aim to:

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1. **Give you a clear picture of what Rūpa means in Abhidhamma.**

2. **Show the 28 kinds of Rūpa in a simple, structured way.**

3. **Connect Rūpa with your own body and daily life**,
   so these are not just dry lists,
   but tools for understanding experience.

You do not need to remember all 28 at once.
You can:

- Start with just the **four great elements**,
  seeing them in your body and around you.

- Then slowly add the **sense organs** and **sense objects**.

- Later, when you feel ready, look at the **more subtle Rūpa**,
  like **space** and the **characteristics of matter** (arising, continuity, decay, impermanence).

If, at some point, you feel lost in the details,
you can always come back to a very simple idea:

> This body is just **Rūpa (matter)** and **Nāma (mind)**
> arising from causes and conditions,
> changing in every moment,
> not truly “self.”

May this book be a small help
for those who wish to see both the mind and the material world
more clearly,
to cling a little less,
and to walk the path of the Buddha
with understanding and compassion.🌿

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Introduction to the Series

The *Introduction to Buddhist Abhidhamma for Beginners* series aims to gently guide students through the main topics of the Abhidhamma Pitaka — the part of the Buddhist canon that analyzes mind and matter in the smallest possible details.

The series follows a natural path:

1. **Understanding the Mind (Citta)** — how consciousness works.
2. **Mental Factors (Cetasika)** — the qualities that accompany consciousness.
3. **Matter (Rūpa)** — the physical side of existence.
4. **Kamma and Rebirth** — how actions bring results.
5. **Cognitive Process** — how we perceive and think.
6. **Dependent Arising** — the web of conditions in life.
7. **Meditation and Insight** — the path of practice.
8. **Nibbāna** — the final peace.

Each book stands alone, but together they build a full picture — from understanding the mind to realizing liberation.

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Introduction to Book 1 — Understanding the Mind (Citta)

Every day, we experience hundreds of thoughts, feelings, and reactions.
We say, "I am happy," or "I am sad." But in the teaching of the Buddha, there is no permanent "I" who feels — only **Citta**, the moment of knowing.

Citta means "consciousness" — the knowing of an object.
It is not a thing but a process. Like bubbles rising and bursting in water, moments of consciousness appear and disappear again and again.
Each moment knows one object — a sight, a sound, a smell, a thought, or an emotion.

In Abhidhamma, this process is explained clearly:

- There are **89 types of consciousness** (or 121 when expanded).
- Each Citta is either wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral.
- Each Citta arises due to causes and passes away immediately.

This book will not use difficult terms.
Instead, it will help you understand Citta through simple ideas and examples from life — like how you feel when you see a flower, or hear your name, or remember something kind.

We will learn:

- What consciousness is and how it works,
- How thoughts arise and pass,
- How the quality of the mind changes moment by moment,
- And how to see this clearly in meditation and daily life.

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By understanding Citta, you begin to understand yourself — not as a fixed person, but as a living stream of awareness shaped by causes and conditions.

As Bhikkhu Bodhi wrote in *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*,

> "Consciousness is the chief factor in experience; it is that which knows its object."

To know consciousness is to begin to know the truth.

Introduction to Book 2 Inside the Mind: Cetasika (Mental Factors)

Series: Introduction to Buddhist Abhidhamma for Beginners

Understanding the 52 mental factors that arise together with Citta (consciousness),
based on the Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha and classic commentaries.

A Note to the Reader

In Book 1, we learned about Citta (mind, consciousness) —
the "knowing" moment that arises and passes, again and again.

But Citta never comes alone.

Each moment of knowing is surrounded and colored by many small helpers.
These helpers are called Cetasika (mental factors).

- *Some are always there, every time you know anything.*
- *Some come only sometimes.*
- *Some are wholesome, making the mind bright.*
- *Some are unwholesome, making the mind dark.*

In the Abhidhamma, these are carefully listed as 52 Cetasikas (mental factors).
They arise together with Citta, share the same object, and disappear together with Citta (this is explained in A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma, chapter II).

In this book, we will:

- *Meet these 52 mental factors like characters in a story.*
- *See how they combine with different types of mind.*

- *Use simple, modern examples so you can spot them in your own daily life.*

You don't need to remember all names at once.
Just relax, read slowly, and let the picture build step by step.

How This Book Is Organized

In Book 2, we will:

1. *Introduce Cetasika – what they are and how they relate to Citta.*

2. *Learn the four big groups:*

    - *Universal mental factors (always present)*

    - *Occasional mental factors (sometimes present)*

    - *Unwholesome mental factors*

    - *Beautiful (wholesome) mental factors*

3. *Meet each factor with:*

    - *Pāli name with English meaning*

    - *Simple explanation*

    - *Real-life example*

    - *Short reflection*

Think of this book as a map of the inner weather of your mind.

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Chapter 1 – Mind and Matter: What is Rūpa?

Imagine you wake up in the morning.

You feel the softness of your pillow.
You see light coming through the window.
You notice a thought: "I don't want to get up..."
You feel a bit of pleasant warmth in the blanket.

Right there, in those first seconds of your day, two things are always working together:

- *Nāma – mind*
- *Rūpa – matter*

Abhidhamma is like a science of mind and matter. In this book we will focus on Rūpa (matter), but in this first chapter we need to see how mind and matter are always a pair.

1.1 The Four Ultimate Realities

In Abhidhamma, the Buddha's teaching is explained in terms of four ultimate realities (cattāro paramattha-dhammā).

They are:

1. *Citta – consciousness, or awareness*
2. *Cetasikā – mental factors that come with the citta*
3. *Rūpa – material phenomena, matter*
4. *Nibbāna – the unconditioned reality, the end of suffering*

You can think of them like this:

- *Citta (mind) – the bare knowing, like the "flash" that knows a colour, a sound, a thought.*

- *Cetasikā (mental factors) – what gives flavour to that knowing: feeling, perception, effort, greed, anger, kindness, etc.*

- *Rūpa (matter) – what does not know anything at all; it is just material and can be known.*

- *Nibbāna – something very special: not mind, not matter, not a thing in the world. It is peace beyond all arising and passing away.*

Citta and cetasikā together are called Nāma (mind).
Nāma and Rūpa together make up the "person" we usually say "I", "you", "he", "she".

Abhidhamma says: if we look very closely at experience, we do not really find a solid "self". We find only these four ultimate realities working according to causes and conditions.

In this book we will zoom in on just one of them: Rūpa (matter).

1.2 What "Rūpa" Means in Abhidhamma

The Pāli word Rūpa has two main meanings in the Abhidhamma:

1. *Rūpa as "matter" or "material phenomena"*
    - *This is the broad meaning.*
    - *It includes all the tiny physical events that make up body and world: hardness, softness, heat, movement, colour, smell, taste, etc.*
2. *Rūpa as "visible form" (colour/shape)*

- *This is a narrow meaning.*

- *Here "rūpa" means only the object that can be seen by the eye – colour and shape.*

So:

- *When we say "Rūpa as one of the four ultimate realities", we mean all material phenomena.*

- *When we say "Rūpa as a sense object", we mean visible form, what the eye sees.*

A simple way to remember:

Rūpa (matter) – everything physical
Rūpa (visible form) – the "picture" that appears at the eye-door

In later chapters, when we speak of five sense objects, "rūpa" will mean visible form only. But in this book's title Inside Reality: Rūpa (Matter), it means material phenomena in general.

1.3 Why Abhidhamma Analyses Matter into 28 Types

In daily life, we talk in big blocks:

- *"my body"*

- *"my hand"*

- *"the table"*

- *"the phone"*

But Abhidhamma asks: What is really there, moment by moment?

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Just like modern science breaks things into atoms and particles, Abhidhamma breaks "matter" into 28 types of Rūpa. Not because the Buddha wanted to be complicated, but because:

- *It helps us see clearly what is actually happening.*
- *It shows that "body" and "world" are not solid; they are changing groups of tiny events.*
- *It prepares the mind to understand impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha), and non-self (anattā) in a very direct way.*

You can think of it like learning music:

- *At first, you just hear "a song".*
- *Then you learn notes: Do, Re, Mi…*
- *Later you can hear harmonies, chords, rhythm.*

Abhidhamma is like learning the notes and chords of reality.
The 28 types of Rūpa are the "notes" on the matter side.

In this chapter, we will not go into detail about all 28. We just want to:

- *Understand what Rūpa is,*
- *See how it works together with mind,*
- *And get a map of what is coming next.*

1.4 Simple Examples: Body as Rūpa, Thoughts as Nāma

Let's go back to the morning scene.

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You are lying in bed.
You feel the softness of the pillow.
You see the light from the window.
You think: "Five more minutes..."

We can divide this like Abhidhamma does:

1.4.1 Rūpa (matter) in that moment

- *Softness of the pillow – a kind of Rūpa (hardness/softness, called the earth element).*
- *Warmth of the blanket – another Rūpa (temperature, the fire element).*
- *The light and colours you see – visible form Rūpa.*
- *Your eye itself – especially the sensitive part called cakkhu-pasāda (eye-sensitivity), also Rūpa.*
- *Your body position, pressure, movement – again forms of Rūpa.*

All of these do not know anything.
They do not think, do not feel, do not plan.
They are just material events.

1.4.2 Nāma (mind) in that moment

Now look at the mind side:

- *The seeing itself – that is citta (consciousness).*
- *The feeling "pleasant / unpleasant / neutral" about the light – that is a cetasikā (mental factor).*
- *The perception "this is my room, this is my window" – also cetasikā.*

- *The lazy thought "I want to sleep more" – again nāma (mind).*

So we can say:

Nāma knows objects.
Rūpa is the object that is known.

Or:

Nāma (mind) – like someone taking a photo.
Rūpa (matter) – like the scene being photographed.

There is no "person" inside the camera.
There is just a process of knowing and a field of things to be known.

1.4.3 More everyday examples

- *You eat ice cream:*
    - *The cold, sweetness, weight in your mouth = Rūpa.*
    - *The happiness, the "Mmm, delicious!" thought = Nāma.*
- *You hear your name called:*
    - *The sound waves, the vibration in your ear = Rūpa.*
    - *The knowing "someone is calling me" and the feeling "annoyed / happy" = Nāma.*
- *You feel anger when someone is rude:*
    - *The redness in your face, faster heartbeat, tight muscles = Rūpa.*
    - *The angry thoughts, the burning feeling in the heart area (as experienced, not the physical tissue) = Nāma.*

Again:

- *Body = Rūpa*
- *Mind = Nāma*
- *What we call a "person" = Nāma + Rūpa together, changing all the time.*

1.5 Map of This Book: Where We Are Going with Rūpa

This chapter is only the door. In the rest of Book 3, we will walk inside the house of Rūpa and look around carefully.

Here is a simple map of what is coming:

1. *Chapter 1 – Mind and Matter: What is Rūpa?*
    - *You are here 😊*
    - *We met the four ultimate realities, and saw how Nāma and Rūpa work together.*
2. *Chapter 2 – The 28 Types of Rūpa at a Glance*
    - *We will meet all 28 kinds of material phenomena.*
    - *We will see the big division between the four great essentials and the 24 derived Rūpas.*
3. *Chapter 3 – The Four Great Essentials (Mahā-bhūta)*
    - *We will study the earth, water, fire, and air elements in Abhidhamma style.*

- *We will connect them with simple body and nature examples.*

4. *Chapter 4 – Sense Organs and Sense Objects as Rūpa*

    - *We will see how eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body are special kinds of Rūpa.*

    - *And how their objects (colour, sound, smell, taste, touch) are also Rūpa.*

5. *Chapter 5 – Life-Support Rūpas: Sex, Heart-Base, Life, Nutriment*

    - *We will learn about sex-qualities, heart-base, life faculty, and nutriment as material things that support life.*

6. *Chapter 6 – Space, Communication, and Change: The Subtle Rūpas*

    - *We will meet the more subtle Rūpas like space, bodily and vocal intimation, lightness, malleability, and the characteristics of arising and passing away.*

7. *Chapter 7 – How Matter is Classified*

    - *We will see pairs like internal/external, gross/subtle, impinging/non-impinging, and understand why they matter.*

8. *Chapter 8 – The Four Origins of Matter*

    - *We will learn that Rūpa does not appear from nowhere: it is born from kamma, mind, temperature, and nutriment.*

9. *Chapter 9 – Rūpa Groups (Rūpa-kalāpa)*

    - *We will see how Rūpas always come in groups, not as lonely pieces.*

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10. Chapter 10 – How Rūpa Occurs in Worlds, Lifetimes, and Moments

- *We will see how matter works across different realms, throughout a lifetime, and at death.*

11. Chapter 11 – Looking Beyond Rūpa: Matter and the Door to Nibbāna

- *We will review what we learned about Rūpa and see how it points beyond itself to Nibbāna, the unconditioned.*

By the end of this book, "my body" and "the world" will not feel so solid anymore. You will start to see them as changing groups of tiny conditioned events – Rūpas – happening together with moments of mind.

Summary of Chapter 1

- *Abhidhamma speaks of four ultimate realities:*
  Citta (consciousness), Cetasikā (mental factors), Rūpa (matter), Nibbāna (unconditioned).

- *Nāma = Citta + Cetasikā (mind).*
  Nāma + Rūpa = what we call a "person".

- *Rūpa has two meanings:*

  - *Matter / material phenomena (broad sense).*

  - *Visible form (colour/shape) (narrow sense, as eye-object).*

- *Abhidhamma analyses matter into 28 types of Rūpa to help us see clearly, like learning the "notes" of reality.*

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- *In daily life, we can already notice:*
    - *Body and physical sensations = Rūpa.*
    - *Thoughts, feelings, perceptions, intentions = Nāma.*
- *This book will slowly explore all aspects of Rūpa: basic elements, senses, life-support Rūpas, subtle Rūpas, their causes, their groups, and how all of this points to impermanence and non-self.*

Reflection Questions

You don't need to "get it all" now. Just gently think about these:

1. *Today, can you notice one moment when you clearly see the difference between Nāma (mind) and Rūpa (body/physical object)?*
2. *When you feel something in the body (like pain or pleasure), what is Rūpa there? What is Nāma?*
3. *How does it feel to think of yourself not as a solid "me", but as mind-and-matter working together?*

If you like, you can write a short diary note:

"Today I saw Nāma and Rūpa when..."

When you're ready, we can move on to Chapter 2 – The 28 Types of Rūpa at a Glance.

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

Chapter 2 – The 28 Types of Rūpa at a Glance

In the last chapter, we saw that Rūpa (matter) is one of the four ultimate realities, and that it always works together with Nāma (mind).

Now we are going to open the toolbox of matter and look at all the pieces inside.

Abhidhamma says there are 28 kinds of Rūpa.
That sounds like a lot, but don't worry. In this chapter, we just want a clear, simple overview. Details will come later, step by step.

2.1 Rūpa is Twofold: The Big Two Groups

In A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma, Chapter VI, Rūpa is first divided into two big categories:

> *"Matter is twofold, namely:*
> *(1) the four great essentials, and*
> *(2) material phenomena derived from the four great essentials."*
> *(p. 235, Compendium of Matter)*

These two are:

1. *Mahā-bhūta – the four great essentials*
    - *Earth element*
    - *Water element*
    - *Fire element*
    - *Air element*
2. *Upādāya-rūpa – derived material phenomena*
    - *All the other 24 kinds of Rūpa that depend on the four great essentials.*

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The book explains that the four great essentials are like the ground or soil, and the derived material phenomena are like trees and shrubs that grow depending on that ground (p. 235).

So you can picture it like this:

- *Mahā-bhūta (four great elements) – the basic building blocks of matter.*

- *Upādāya-rūpa (24 derived) – the things built from those blocks: eye-sensitivity, sound, smell, sex-qualities, space, and so on.*

All together they make 28 kinds of Rūpa.

2.2 Concretely Produced Matter (Nipphanna-rūpa) – 18 Kinds

The same text then says that all 28 Rūpas are grouped into eleven general classes.
Out of these eleven:

- *7 classes are called concretely produced matter (nipphanna-rūpa).*

- *4 classes are called non-concretely produced matter (anipphanna-rūpa).*

The concretely produced ones:

> *"...are called concretely produced matter (nipphanna-rūpa), since they possess intrinsic natures and are thus suitable for contemplation and comprehension by insight." (p. 235)*

On the next page, Table 6.1 lists these as "CONCRETELY PRODUCED MATTER (18)" (p. 236). These 18 kinds fall into seven groups:

I. Great Essentials (4)

1. *Earth element – hardness/softness*

2. *Water element – cohesion, fluidity*

3. *Fire element – temperature, heat/cold*

4. *Air element – pressure, motion*

(We will study these in detail in Chapter 3.)

II. Sensitive Phenomena (5)

These are the sense "doors" inside the body:

5. *Eye-sensitivity (cakkhu-pasāda)*

6. *Ear-sensitivity (sota-pasāda)*

7. *Nose-sensitivity (ghāna-pasāda)*

8. *Tongue-sensitivity (jivhā-pasāda)*

9. *Body-sensitivity (kāya-pasāda)*

These are not just the big eyeball or whole ear. They are the delicate, sensitive parts that can receive colour, sound, smell, taste, or touch (explained around p. 234–235).

III. Objective Phenomena (Sense-Objects)

These are the objects that can be known by the senses. Table 6.1 shows:

10. *Visible form – colour/shape*

11. *Sound*

12. *Smell*

13. Taste

** Tangibility – made up of three great elements: earth, fire, and air (p. 236)*

So when you smell perfume, taste chocolate, touch a soft pillow, or hear music, the object side of that experience is Rūpa in this group.

IV. Sexual Phenomena (2)

These are material sex-qualities:

- *Femininity*
- *Masculinity*

The table calls this group "Sexual Phenomena" and lists:

14. Femininity

15. Masculinity

These are not feelings or social roles. They are material factors that support female or male characteristics (explained further on p. 263).

V. Heart Phenomenon (1)

This is:

16. Heart-base (hadaya-vatthu)

According to the Abhidhamma system, this is the material base for certain kinds of mind (cittas) in beings who have a physical body.

VI. Life Phenomenon (1)

17. Life faculty (material) – jīvitindriya-rūpa

This is the life-power on the material side, the factor that keeps Rūpa "alive" as long as it lasts (distinct from mental life).

VII. Nutritional Phenomenon (1)

18. Nutriment – āhāra-rūpa

Table 6.1 calls this "Nutritional Phenomenon – Nutriment" (p. 236). It is the nutritive essence in food that supports and produces new matter in the body.

2.3 Non-Concrete Matter (Anipphanna-rūpa) – 10 Kinds

The other four classes are called non-concretely produced matter (anipphanna-rūpa) (p. 235). On the same table, they are listed under "NON-CONCRETE MATTER (10)" (p. 236).

These are more abstract material phenomena. They do not have an independent "lump" or solidness like the others, but they are still counted as Rūpa in Abhidhamma.

The 10 kinds are:

VIII. Limiting Phenomenon (1)

19. Space element (ākāsa-dhātu)

This is the "gap" or "space" between groups of Rūpa.
Not outer space with stars, but the tiny intervals that let material groups be separate.

IX. Communicating Phenomena (2)

20. Bodily intimation – kāya-viññatti

21. Vocal intimation – vācī-viññatti

These are the Rūpas that make communication through body and speech possible. When you wave your hand or move your mouth to speak, these special Rūpas are involved.

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X. Mutable (or "Plastic") Phenomena (3)

22. *Lightness – lahutā*

23. *Malleability – mudutā*

24. *Wieldiness – kammaññatā*

These show how flexible, light, and workable the body (or other matter) is, under conditions like climate, food, and mind. Table 6.1 gathers them together as "Mutable Phenomena" (p. 236).

XI. Characteristics of Matter (4)

25. *Production (uppāda)*

26. *Continuity (ṭhiti / santati)*

27. *Decay (jaratā)*

28. *Impermanence (aniccatā)*

The table calls these "Characteristics of Matter" (p. 236). They are the four stages of a Rūpa's very short life: arising, staying, ageing, and breaking up.

Even though these are "non-concrete", Abhidhamma still counts them as Rūpa, because they are real features of material phenomena, not just ideas in our heads.

2.4 A Simple "Poster-Style" List of All 28 Rūpas

Here is a simple list you can imagine as a poster on your wall.
(You don't have to memorize it now. Just get a feeling for the map.)

Concretely Produced Matter (18) – they have strong, clear "own-nature"

1. *Earth element*
2. *Water element*
3. *Fire element*
4. *Air element*
5. *Eye-sensitivity*
6. *Ear-sensitivity*
7. *Nose-sensitivity*
8. *Tongue-sensitivity*
9. *Body-sensitivity*
10. *Visible form (colour/shape)*
11. *Sound*
12. *Smell*
13. *Taste*
14. *Tangibility (pressure/touch – made of earth, fire, air elements)*

15.Femininity

16.Masculinity

17. Heart-base

18.Life faculty (material)

19. Nutriment (nutritive essence in food)

(Exact numbering can vary in print because tangibility is shown as "= 3 elements," but these are the 18 items grouped under "Concretely Produced Matter (18)" in Table 6.1, p. 236.)

Non-Concrete Matter (10) – more abstract, still counted as Rūpa

20. Space element (ākāsa-dhātu)

21.Bodily intimation

22. Vocal intimation

23. Lightness

24. Malleability

25. Wieldiness

26. Production

27.Continuity

28. Decay

29.Impermanence

(These 10 are listed as "NON-CONCRETE MATTER (10)", p. 236.)

You do not need to perfectly remember all the Pāli names or numbers. This chapter's main job is to give you a bird's-eye view:

- *Rūpa = 28 kinds*
- *Divided into:*
    - *4 great essentials*
    - *24 derived Rūpas*
- *Grouped again as:*
    - *18 concretely produced (nipphanna-rūpa)*
    - *10 non-concrete (anipphanna-rūpa)*

In the next chapters, we will zoom in on each big section, with stories and examples so it becomes more and more familiar.

Summary of Chapter 2

- *The Abhidhamma divides Rūpa into two main categories:*
    - *Four great essentials (mahā-bhūta)*
    - *Twenty-four derived material phenomena (upādāya-rūpa) (p. 235).*
- *These twenty-eight kinds of Rūpa are grouped into eleven classes:*

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- *Seven classes of concretely produced matter (nipphanna-rūpa) – 18 types (Table 6.1, p. 236).*

- *Four classes of non-concrete matter (anipphanna-rūpa) – 10 types.*

- *Concretely produced Rūpas have clear, strong natures, easier for insight to see.*

- *Non-concrete Rūpas are more subtle and abstract, but still real features of matter.*

- *You now have a map of all 28 Rūpas. We will use this map for the rest of Book 3.*

Reflection Questions

You can think about these quietly or write short answers in a notebook:

1. *Out of the list of 28 Rūpas, which ones feel most familiar from your daily life? (For example: sound, taste, body-sensitivity…)*

2. *Does it change how you see things if you think: "This sound is just Rūpa, and the hearing and liking/disliking are Nāma"?*

3. *The book says some Rūpas are "concretely produced" and some are "non-concrete." In simple words, how would you explain the difference?*

When you are ready, we can move on to Chapter 3 – The Four Great Essentials (Mahā-bhūta), where we explore earth, water, fire, and air as Abhidhamma understands them.

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Chapter 3 – The Four Great Essentials (Mahā-bhūta)

Imagine you pick up a stone, drink some water, feel warmth from the sun, and notice the wind on your skin.

In Abhidhamma, all these different experiences are traced back to four basic kinds of matter, called the four great essentials or Mahā-bhūta:

- *Paṭhavī-dhātu – earth element*
- *Āpo-dhātu – water element*
- *Tejo-dhātu – fire element*
- *Vāyo-dhātu – air element*

The Abhidhamma says these four are the "primary material elements – earth, water, fire, and air", the fundamental constituents of matter, inseparable, and present in everything "from the most minute particle to the most massive mountain."

Let's get to know each one in a simple way.

3.1 Why Are They Called "Great Essentials"?

In Abhidhamma, these four are called elements (dhātu) because they "bear their own intrinsic natures."

They are also called "great essentials" (mahā-bhūta) because:

- *They are primary – other kinds of matter depend on them.*
- *They are everywhere in the material world.*
- *They are the basis for all the more complex forms of Rūpa (like eye-sensitivity, sound, or heart-base).*

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Abhidhamma explains that twenty-eight types of material phenomena are grouped into two big classes:

1. *The four great essentials*

2. *Material phenomena derived from the four great essentials (24 kinds)*

So the four great essentials are like the "ground", and the other 24 Rūpas are like trees and plants that grow depending on this ground.

3.2 Paṭhavī-dhātu – Earth Element (Hardness / Softness)

The earth element (Paṭhavī-dhātu) is the element of solidity or extension.

The manual says:

- *The earth element is called element because it bears its own intrinsic nature.*
- *It is "so called because, like the earth, it serves as a support or foundation for the coexisting material phenomena."*
- *The word paṭhavī comes from a root meaning "to expand or spread out", so it represents the principle of extension.*
- *It has the characteristic of hardness, the function of acting as a foundation, and manifestation as receiving.*
- *Its proximate cause is the other three great essentials.*
- *Hardness and softness are just different ways the earth element is experienced by touch.*

Simple way to feel Paṭhavī-dhātu:

- *When you press the table, feel how hard it is.*
- *When you squeeze a cushion or a piece of bread, notice softness.*

In both cases, you are experiencing earth element – just in different degrees.

In your body:

- *The firmness of your bones*
- *The solid feeling in your teeth*
- *Even the "weight" you feel when standing*

These are all experiences of Paṭhavī-dhātu.

3.3 Āpo-dhātu – Water Element (Cohesion / Binding)

The water element (Āpo-dhātu) is very special in Abhidhamma.

The manual explains that:

- *The water element has the characteristic of cohesion, and*
- *It cannot be experienced as a tangible object by touch, but can only be cognized through the mind-door.*

So, when Abhidhamma speaks of tangible objects, it says they are made of only three of the great essentials:

- *Earth element – hardness / softness*
- *Fire element – heat / cold*

- *Air element – pressure / distension*

The water element is not included in tangible object because it is the principle of cohesion and belongs to subtle matter (sukhumarūpa), which is included under mental object.

Everyday feel of cohesion:

Even if you don't "touch" cohesion directly, you can notice its effects:

- *Rice grains sticking together when cooked*
- *A drop of water holding its round shape*
- *Your body tissue holding together instead of falling apart*

All these depend on the "sticking" or "binding" power of Āpo-dhātu.

3.4 Tejo-dhātu – Fire Element (Temperature, Heat / Cold)

The fire element (Tejo-dhātu) is the element of temperature.

The Abhidhamma explains:

- *In the tangible object, the fire element is "experienced as heat or cold."*
- *Elsewhere it says the fire element, which includes both cold and heat, produces material phenomena originating from temperature (utu-samuṭṭhāna-rūpa) inside and outside the body.*

So Tejo-dhātu is not only "hot" – it also includes coldness as the other side of temperature.

Easy way to notice Tejo-dhātu:

- *Feel the warmth of a cup of tea in your hand.*

- *Feel the cold of ice or cold water touching your skin.*

- *Notice when the room feels hot at midday and cool at night.*

All those are experiences of fire element in different degrees.

In your body, Tejo-dhātu is connected with:

- *Body warmth*

- *Digestion (the "heat" that transforms food)*

- *Changes in temperature when you are sick, or when you exercise*

3.5 Vāyo-dhātu – Air Element (Movement, Pressure)

The air element (Vāyo-dhātu) is the element of motion or pressure.

The text says:

- *In the tangible object, the air element is experienced as pressure.*

- *Another place describes the air element as being "experienced as distension or pressure."*

So, Vāyo-dhātu is the pushing, stretching, moving quality in matter.

Everyday feel of Vāyo-dhātu:

- *When you breathe in, you can feel the chest expanding – that's air element.*

- *When you stretch your arm and feel the tightness in muscles, that pressure is also air element.*

- *The wind blowing against your face is a clear outer example of motion and pressure.*

Inside the body, Vāyo-dhātu is behind all kinds of movements:

- *Shifting posture*
- *Moving your eyes, hands, and feet*
- *The "gurgling" movement in the stomach and intestines*

3.6 Always Mixed: From Tiny Particle to Mountain

Now the important point:

Abhidhamma does not say there is some piece of matter that is "only earth element" or "only fire element."

Instead, it says:

> *The four great essentials "are the fundamental constituents of matter which are inseparable and which, in their various combinations, enter into the composition of all material substances, from the most minute particle to the most massive mountain."*

So in any bit of matter:

- *There is always some solidity (earth element)*
- *Some binding (water element)*
- *Some temperature (fire element)*
- *Some pressure or movement (air element)*

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Later, the manual explains that colour, odour, taste, nutritive essence, and the four great essentials form eight inseparable material phenomena – they always occur together.

This becomes the basis for Rūpa-groups (Rūpa-kalāpa) and octads, which we will study in a later chapter. For now, it is enough to remember:

> *Every bit of matter is a team-work of these four great essentials.*

When you touch your own body, you are not touching a "self" – you are contacting these four elements, arranged in complex groups, arising and passing away, moment by moment.

Summary

- *The Abhidhamma divides matter into the four great essentials and 24 derived material phenomena.*

- *The four great essentials (mahā-bhūta) are:*
  - *Paṭhavī-dhātu (earth element) – solidity, hardness/softness; foundation and extension.*
  - *Āpo-dhātu (water element) – cohesion, binding; subtle and known by mind, not touch.*
  - *Tejo-dhātu (fire element) – temperature; experienced as heat or cold.*
  - *Vāyo-dhātu (air element) – motion, distension, pressure.*

- *They are inseparable and present in all matter, from tiny particles to huge mountains.*

- *What we feel as hard, warm, moving, sticking together is really the play of these four elements in different strengths.*

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Reflection Questions

You can think or write about these:

1. *When you touch something hard or soft today, can you label it as Paṭhavī-dhātu (earth element) in your mind?*

2. *Can you notice temperature – warm or cool – in your body and call it Tejo-dhātu (fire element)?*

3. *When you feel your breath moving or muscles stretching, can you see that as Vāyo-dhātu (air element)?*

4. *Think about cohesion (sticking together) – cooked rice, your body not falling apart. How does this help you understand Āpo-dhātu (water element)?*

5. *How does seeing the body as only four elements working together, instead of "I" or "mine," support the idea of non-self (anattā)?*

If you're happy with this chapter, next we can go deeper into how these elements build sense organs and sense objects in Chapter 4 – Sense Organs and Sense Objects as Rūpa.

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Chapter 4 – Sense Organs and Sense Objects as Rūpa

Close your eyes for a moment.

You still have a body.
But there is no colour, no shape, no "phone screen," no "room" in your experience right now.

Now open your eyes.

Suddenly: colours, shapes, brightness.
The world appears again.

From the Abhidhamma point of view, this simple action – closing and opening your eyes – depends on special kinds of Rūpa (matter):

- *Sense organs inside the body*

- *Sense objects outside (or contacting) the body*

In this chapter, we will see how Abhidhamma explains these in a very clear way.

4.1 The Five "Doors": Eye, Ear, Nose, Tongue, Body as Pasāda-rūpa

In A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma, the 28 types of Rūpa are grouped in a table called "The 28 Material Phenomena at a Glance" (Chapter VI, Table 6.1, page 236). There, the second group is:

II. Sensitive Phenomena
5. Eye-sensitivity
6. Ear-sensitivity
7. Nose-sensitivity
8. Tongue-sensitivity
9. Body-sensitivity
(Table 6.1, p. 236, A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma)

These are called pasāda-rūpa – "sensitive" or "clear" material phenomena". They are not the whole big eyeball or the whole ear. They are the very delicate parts that can receive the sense object.

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On page 237, the text calls these "Sensitive material phenomena: eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body." (p. 237)

You can think of them as:

- *Eye-sensitivity (cakkhu-pasāda) – the tiny, sensitive part of the eye that can receive visible form (colour/shape).*

- *Ear-sensitivity (sota-pasāda) – the sensitive part of the ear that can receive sound.*

- *Nose-sensitivity (ghāna-pasāda) – the sensitive part of the nose that receives smells.*

- *Tongue-sensitivity (jivhā-pasāda) – the sensitive part of the tongue for taste.*

- *Body-sensitivity (kāya-pasāda) – a subtle sensitivity spread through the body, "like a liquid soaking a layer of cotton," so it can register tactile sensations (touch, pressure, etc.). (p. 239)*

On page 239 the manual says that eye-sensitivity's characteristic is "sensitivity of the primary elements that is ready for the impact of visible data." The other sensitivities – ear, nose, tongue, and body – are understood in the same way, with the appropriate objects. (p. 239)

The Abhidhamma also calls these "doors" (dvāra), because they are like doorways for mind (Nāma) to receive information.
On page 245, it says that these five sensitivities "are doors of cognition, that is, media for consciousness and mental factors to access their corresponding objects." (p. 245)

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So, we have five "internal doors":

- *Eye-door*
- *Ear-door*
- *Nose-door*
- *Tongue-door*
- *Body-door*

Each door is made of a special Rūpa called pasāda-rūpa.

4.2 Sense Objects as Rūpa: Visible Form, Sound, Smell, Taste, Tangibility

The same table (page 236) shows the next group:

> *III. Objective Phenomena*
> *10. Visible form*
> *11. Sound*
> *12. Smell*
> *13. Taste*
> *14. Tangibility*
> *(Table 6.1, p. 236)*

These are the five sense objects – the "things" that meet the doors.

On page 237 the text explains:

> *"Objective material phenomena (gocararūpa) are the five sense fields which serve as the objective supports for the corresponding types of consciousness." (p. 239; translated from the Pali definition on p. 237)*

So each sense door has a matching object:

- *Eye-sensitivity meets visible form – colour/shape.*

- *Ear-sensitivity meets sound.*
- *Nose-sensitivity meets smell.*
- *Tongue-sensitivity meets taste.*
- *Body-sensitivity meets tangibility (touch, pressure).*

On page 239, the manual explains tangible object more carefully. It says that:

- *Tangibility is constituted by three of the great essentials:*
    - *Earth element – experienced as hardness/softness*
    - *Fire element – experienced as heat/cold*
    - *Air element – experienced as pressure*
- *The water element (cohesion) is not counted in tangibility because it belongs to subtle matter and is known through the mind-door, not directly by touch. (p. 239)*

So, when your body feels "hard," "warm," or "pressure," Abhidhamma says you are experiencing those three great essentials as tangible object Rūpa.

All five sense objects are derived matter (upādāya-rūpa) – they depend on the four great essentials. The text notes that "the four sense objects—visible forms, etc.—are types of derived matter," supported by the four great elements. (p. 239)

4.3 "Impinging" vs "Non-Impinging" Matter

The manual also uses some technical words to describe certain Rūpas.

On page 239, speaking about objective material phenomena, it says:

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"Collectively, objective material phenomena have the characteristic of impinging on the sense bases. Their function is to be the objects of sense consciousness. They are manifested as the resort of the respective sense consciousness. Their proximate cause is the four great essentials." (p. 239)

So:

- *Impinging matter = Rūpa that can strike or impact a sense door and give rise to sense consciousness.*

- *These include:*

    - *The five sense objects (visible form, sound, smell, taste, tangibility)*

    - *And also the five sense-bases themselves, as conditions in the process.*

Later, in the classification section (page 245), the terms "gross, proximate, and impinging material phenomena" are explained. It says these terms:

- *Are used in a technical sense,*

- *Apply only to material phenomena that are instrumental in the genesis of sense-consciousness,*

- *And do not refer to size or distance in the ordinary way. (p. 245)*

It then says that:

- *Rūpas that directly contribute to the arising of sense consciousness are called gross, near, and impinging.*

- *Rūpas that do not directly contribute to sense-consciousness are called subtle, distant, and non-impinging, regardless of their actual size or physical distance. (p. 245)*

A simple way to say this:

> *Impinging Rūpas are the ones that can "hit" a sense door and help create a moment of seeing, hearing, etc.*
> *Non-impinging Rūpas are everything else – material phenomena that do not directly take part in that specific sense event.*

4.4 Internal vs External Rūpa

The Abhidhamma also divides Rūpa into internal (ajjhattika) and external (bahiddhā).

On page 245, under "Internal (ajjhattika)", it says that the word "internal" is used in a technical sense and:

> *"...is used in relation to matter in a technical sense applicable only to the five types of sensitive materiality which serve as the doors for the mental phenomena. Accordingly, only these five sensitive factors are referred to as internal." (p. 245)*

So, technically:

- *Only the five pasāda-rūpas – eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, and body-sensitivity – are called internal material phenomena.*

- *Everything else – visible forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangibles, and all other Rūpas – are classed as external in this technical Abhidhamma sense.*

This is a bit different from our usual way of talking.

In everyday speech we say:

- *"My body is internal"*

- *"The chair is external"*

But in the Abhidhamma's technical classification:

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- *Internal = only the five sense bases (pasāda-rūpa).*

- *External = all the rest, including much of what we call "my body."*

This helps us see that:

- *The "inside" that matters for cognition is not the whole physical body, but just the five subtle doors where mind and matter meet.*

- *Even most of "my body" is, in this system, external matter.*

This supports the insight that there is no solid inner "self" owning the body – there are just doors and objects, Nāma and Rūpa, working together.

4.5 How Citta Uses Rūpa-Doors in a Seeing or Hearing Moment

Now let's put it all together with a simple example.

Example 1: Seeing a red flower

You look at a red flower.

From the Abhidhamma view:

- *In the eye there is eye-sensitivity (cakkhu-pasāda) – a delicate Rūpa, counted as sensitive material phenomena (p. 236–237).*

- *In front of the eye there is visible form Rūpa – the colour/shape of the flower, counted as objective material phenomena (p. 236).*

- *When conditions are right (enough light, correct distance, healthy eye, attention, etc.), the visible form impinges on the eye-sensitivity.*

- *This contact helps give rise to a moment of seeing consciousness (cakkhu-viññāṇa).*

- *That citta (consciousness) is Nāma.*

- *The eye-sensitivity and visible form are Rūpa.*

So even in one tiny instant of "seeing a flower," there is no "little person" inside the eye. Instead there is:

Door-Rūpa (eye-sensitivity)

- *Object-Rūpa (visible form)*

- *Citta & Cetasikā (seeing and mental factors)*
  = one moment of visual experience

Example 2: Feeling the phone in your hand

You are holding your phone.

- *Body-sensitivity (kāya-pasāda) is spread through the body "like a liquid soaking cotton," ready to register tactile sensations (p. 239).*

- *In the phone and your hand there are tangible Rūpas: hardness, temperature, pressure (made from the three elements: earth, fire, air – p. 239).*

- *When the phone presses on your skin, tangibility impinges on body-sensitivity.*

- *This gives rise to a moment of body-consciousness – knowing "hard," "smooth," "warm," etc.*

- *Again, door and object are Rūpa, and the knowing is Nāma.*

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Every moment of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching works like this: a sense-door Rūpa meets a sense-object Rūpa, and Citta arises dependent on them.

Summary of Chapter 4

- *Among the 28 Rūpas, five are "Sensitive Phenomena" (pasāda-rūpa): eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, and body-sensitivity. These are the five sense doors, explained in Table 6.1 (p. 236) and in the text (p. 237, 239).*

- *Another five are "Objective Phenomena" (gocararūpa): visible form, sound, smell, taste, and tangibility – the sense objects (p. 236, 239).*

- *Tangibility is made of three great essentials – earth (hard/soft), fire (heat/cold), and air (pressure) – while water (cohesion) is not included as a tangible object (p. 239).*

- *Objective Rūpas "impinge" on the sense bases and serve as objects of sense consciousness (p. 239).*

- *In technical Abhidhamma language, only the five sensitivities are called "internal" Rūpas; all other Rūpas are external (p. 245).*

- *Each moment of seeing, hearing, etc. is just door-Rūpa meeting object-Rūpa, with Citta and Cetasikā arising to know the object. No solid "self" is found in this process.*

Reflection Questions

1. *Today, when you see something clearly, can you pause and think:*
    - *"Here, eye-sensitivity Rūpa is meeting visible form Rūpa, and mind is knowing it"?*

2. *Try this with hearing:*
    - *When you hear a sound, what is door (Rūpa)?*
    - *What is object (Rūpa)?*
    - *What is the knowing (Nāma)?*
3. *How does it change your feeling of "my body" when you learn that, technically, only five tiny sensitive Rūpas are called "internal", and most of the rest is "external"?*
4. *Can you recall a moment when a sound or sight seemed to "hit" you strongly?*
    - *In Abhidhamma terms, this is an impinging object playing a strong role in the arising of sense-consciousness.*

If you're ready, next we'll look at Chapter 5 – Life-Support Rūpas: Sex, Heart-Base, Life, Nutriment, and see how these material phenomena quietly support a whole human life from conception to death.

Chapter 5 – Life-Support Rūpas: Sex, Heart-Base, Life, Nutriment

Think of a human life like a phone running an app.

- *The screen and case are like Rūpa (matter).*
- *The apps and data are like Nāma (mind).*
- *But the phone also needs:*
    - *A system chip to run things,*
    - *A battery to keep it alive,*
    - *Settings that make it "this model" and not another,*
    - *And charging / power to keep going.*

In Abhidhamma, there are special kinds of Rūpa that play similar "support" roles in a living being:

1. *Sex-qualities (bhāva-rūpa) – making the body female or male*
2. *Heart-base (hadaya-vatthu) – material base for certain kinds of consciousness*
3. *Material life faculty (jīvitindriya-rūpa) – keeps body-Rūpa alive*
4. *Nutriment (āhāra-rūpa) – nutritive essence that builds and feeds matter*

The Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma lists them together as:

- *Sexual phenomena: femininity & masculinity*

- *Heart phenomenon: heart-base*
- *Life phenomenon: life faculty*
- *Nutritional phenomenon: nutriment*

Let's explore them one by one in simple language.

5.1 Sex as a Material Phenomenon

Abhidhamma speaks of bhāva-rūpa, "material phenomena of sex":

- *Itthibhāva-rūpa – femininity*
- *Purisabhāva-rūpa – masculinity*

They are counted as sexual phenomena in the list of 28 Rūpas.

Later, in a section on faculties (indriya), the text explains that:

- *The sex faculty "controls the manifestation of masculine or feminine features and traits, so that the whole personality tends towards either femininity or masculinity."*

So, in Abhidhamma:

- *Sex is not just about outer organs or social roles.*
- *It is a subtle material factor in the body that:*
    - *Supports the development of male or female features,*
    - *Influences appearance and bodily traits,*

- *Acts as a "faculty" (indriya) on the material side.*

Technically, it is also one of the "faculties" among material phenomena, along with the five sense bases and life faculty.

Simple example:

Think of a plant seed:

- *Some seeds grow into mango trees, some into banana trees.*

- *The "mango-ness" or "banana-ness" is already there in a very subtle form in the seed.*

In the same way, Abhidhamma says that femininity or masculinity is a subtle Rūpa present from the beginning of a life, shaping the body's "type".

It is still only matter, arising and falling away, produced by conditions such as kamma (we'll connect this in section 5.5).

5.2 Heart-Base as the "Seat" of Certain Mental Processes

Next is the heart-base (hadaya-vatthu), listed as:

> *"Material phenomenon of the heart: the heart-base."*

In the Compendium of Matter (Chapter VI) and Compendium of Cetasikas (Chapter II), it is explained that:

- *In realms where material form (Rūpa) exists, consciousness (citta) and mental factors (cetasikā) arise depending on a physical base.*

- *This base can be one of the five sense organs or the heart-base.*

So Abhidhamma treats heart-base as:

- *A material support for mind,*

- *Especially for mind-door processes (thinking, imagining, remembering),*
- *One of the "bases" (vatthu) for consciousness, together with the five sense-bases.*

Important point:

- *Heart-base is still only Rūpa.*
- *It does not "think" by itself.*
- *It's like the circuit board in a phone: the apps (mind) run on it, but it's not the mind itself.*

So when you:

- *Daydream,*
- *Plan your homework,*
- *Remember something from years ago,*

Abhidhamma says these mind-events arise with heart-base as their material support (for beings with Rūpa).

5.3 Life Faculty in Rūpa vs Life of Citta

Now we come to jīvitindriya, the life faculty.

The text explains that life faculty is twofold:

- *Physical life faculty (rūpa-jīvitindriya)*
- *Mental life faculty (nāma-jīvitindriya)*

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In Chapter VI, the material life faculty is listed as:

"Material phenomenon of life: the life faculty."

In another chapter (Compendium of Conditionality), it says:

- *The material life faculty is a "faculty condition" for other material phenomena in the same group,*
- *It "controls them by maintaining their vitality,"*
- *And it is compared to a pilot controlling a ship.*

So we can say:

- *Rūpa-jīvitindriya = the "life of the body-matter".*
    - *It keeps certain material groups "alive" as long as their small lifespan lasts.*
- *Nāma-jīvitindriya = the "life of the mind-moments", supporting cittas and cetasikas.*

In this chapter we focus on the material side:

- *Material life faculty is one of the material faculties, along with the five sensitivities and the two sex-qualities.*

Simple image:

Imagine a bunch of tiny lamps (the different Rūpas in one Rūpa-group).
Life faculty is like the small power-line that keeps them lit for a moment.

When its job is done, the whole group of Rūpa goes out together.

5.4 Nutriment: How Food Builds New Material Groups

The last of our four life-support Rūpas is nutriment (āhāra-rūpa).

In the list of 28, it is called:

> *"Material phenomenon of nutriment: edible food."*

In the section on Nutriments, the text says:

- *There are four nutriments:*

    1. *Edible food*
    2. *Contact*
    3. *Mental volition*
    4. *Consciousness*

- *The word nutriment (āhāra) means that which sustains by acting as a strong supporting condition.*

- *Edible food as nutriment "sustains the physical body" in the Sutta approach, and in the Abhidhamma approach it "sustains the material phenomena of fourfold origination in the body."*

In Chapter VI's section on nutriment-born matter, it further explains:

- *Nutriment, known as nutritive essence (ojā),*

- *On reaching presence, produces material phenomena originating from nutriment at the time it is swallowed.*

- *This nutritive essence creates new "pure octads" (basic 8-fold Rūpa groups), again and again, so that "the occurrence of octads links up ten or twelve*

times."

- *Nutriment taken by a pregnant mother originates materiality in the child, and even food smeared on the body is said to originate materiality.*

So nutriment (āhāra-rūpa) is not just "lunch."

It is:

- *The nutritive essence in food,*
- *A type of Rūpa itself,*
- *And a cause that generates new Rūpa-groups in the body.*

Everyday picture:

You eat rice → rice is digested → its nutritive essence becomes āhāra-rūpa → that, in turn, produces new Rūpa-kalāpas (material groups) inside your body.

It's like:

Charging a phone:

- *The charger (food you eat)*
- *The electricity (nutritive essence)*
- *The battery filling up and letting the phone continue running (new Rūpa-groups in the body).*

5.5 How These Rūpas Appear in a Human Life: From Conception Onward

Now let's see how these four life-support Rūpas appear in a human life story, from the Abhidhamma angle.

In the section on matter originating from kamma, the manual says:

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- *Material phenomena originate from four causes: kamma, consciousness, temperature, and nutriment.*

- *Kamma produces eighteen kinds of material phenomena, including:*

    - *the five sensitivities,*

    - *the two sex faculties,*

    - *the life faculty,*

    - *the heart-base,*

    - *and other Rūpas.*

Later, in the section on Rūpa-groups (kalāpas) produced by kamma, it describes:

- *Eye-decad: eight inseparable Rūpas + life faculty + eye*

- *Ear-decad, nose-decad, tongue-decad, body-decad*

- *Female-decad and male-decad (sex faculty groups)*

- *Base-decad (with heart-base)*

- *Vital nonad (inseparable eight + life faculty only)*

These groups are said to be kamma-born – produced at rebirth-linking and then repeatedly during life by past volitional actions.

Putting it together in a story:

1. *At conception (rebirth-linking)*

- *A new life begins with certain Rūpa-groups already present:*
  - *A vital nonad (life faculty + eight inseparables),*
  - *Possibly eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, body-decads,*
  - *A female-decads or male-decads according to kamma,*
  - *A heart-base decad (material base for mind).*
- *This is like the phone's model, chip, and battery being set up at the factory.*

2. *During life*
   - *Kamma continues to produce these Rūpas moment by moment.*
   - *Mind (citta) also produces new Rūpas, especially for bodily and verbal intimation and some sounds.*
   - *Temperature (utu) produces matter based on internal and external fire element.*
   - *Nutriment produces many rounds of pure octads, sustaining the body.*
3. *Throughout all this:*
   - *Sex faculties (bhāva-rūpa) shape the masculine or feminine pattern of the body and personality.*
   - *Heart-base functions as the base for many cittas, especially in mind-door processes.*

- *Material life faculty acts like a pilot, keeping each kamma-born group of Rūpa "alive" for its short span.*

- *Nutriment keeps making fresh Rūpa-groups so the "ship of the body" continues sailing.*

4. *Towards death*

- *At the end of a life, these kamma-born groups stop being renewed.*

- *The life faculty in Rūpa no longer continues as the supporting pilot for the body's material groups.*

- *But the force of kamma can create a new stream of Nāma-Rūpa in a next existence (this is covered more carefully in Book 1 and later chapters on death & rebirth).*

In all of this, there is no permanent "self" running the body.

There are only:

- *Special kinds of Rūpa (sex, heart-base, life faculty, nutriment),*

- *Arising and passing away under kamma and other conditions,*

- *Supporting a flow of mind and matter we call "a person."*

Summary of Chapter 5

- *Among the 28 Rūpas, four are especially important for supporting life:*

    - *Sex-qualities (femininity, masculinity) – material faculties that control the manifestation of male or female traits.*

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- *Heart-base – material base for consciousness in beings with Rūpa; one of the six "bases" for mind.*

- *Material life faculty – maintains vitality of its Rūpa-group like a pilot steering a ship.*

- *Nutriment (nutritive essence) – sustains physical body and generates new Rūpa-groups from eaten food.*

- *These Rūpas arise mainly from kamma and nutriment, organized in groups (decads, nonads, octads) present from rebirth-linking onward.*

- *Seeing these as just conditioned material supports, not "me" or "mine," helps loosen clinging to the body and identity.*

Reflection Questions

1. *When you think "I am male" or "I am female," how does it feel to see this, in Abhidhamma, as just a sex-faculty Rūpa, not a permanent self?*

2. *Can you imagine heart-base like a circuit board where mind runs, instead of a "little self" inside the heart?*

3. *When you eat food, can you reflect:*
   "This food becomes nutritive essence, producing new Rūpa-groups in my body"?

4. *How does understanding life faculty as a kind of pilot for material groups change how you think about "my life" or "my body"?*

The next we can explore Chapter 6 – Space, Communication, and Change: The Subtle Rūpas, where we meet space element, bodily and vocal intimation, and the Rūpas that show how matter is light, bendable, and always changing.

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Chapter 6 – Space, Communication, and Change: The Subtle Rūpas

Imagine you're in a small room talking with a friend.

- *You move your hands while you speak.*
- *Your voice carries your meaning.*
- *There is space between you and your friend.*
- *Your body feels light on some days, heavy on others.*
- *And moment by moment, your body is quietly arising, continuing, ageing, and breaking up.*

All of this involves very subtle kinds of Rūpa that Abhidhamma calls non-concretely produced matter.

In Chapter VI of A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma, the 28 Rūpas are grouped into 11 classes. The last four classes are:

- *Limiting phenomenon – space element*
- *Communicating phenomena – bodily and vocal intimation*
- *Mutable phenomena – lightness, malleability, wieldiness (plus the two intimations)*
- *Characteristics of matter – production, continuity, decay, impermanence*

These ten are called non-concrete matter (anipphanna-rūpa). The text explains:

> *"The types of matter in groups (8)–(11) are designated non-concretely produced matter (anipphannarūpa) because they do not arise directly from the four main causes of matter … but exist as modalities or*

attributes of concretely produced matter. Thus they are not included among the ultimate realities (paramattha dhamma)."

So these Rūpas:

- *Are still about matter,*
- *But they are more like ways matter shows itself (space, lightness, change…),*
- *Not like the "hard core" Rūpas such as earth element, eye-sensitivity, or sound.*

Let's meet them in three groups:

1. *Space element (ākāsa-dhātu) – how matter is separated*
2. *Bodily and vocal intimation – how the body "speaks"*
3. *Mutable and characteristic Rūpas – how matter is light, workable, and always changing*

6.1 Space Element: How "Gaps" Are Treated in Abhidhamma

In Table 6.1, under "NON-CONCRETE MATTER (10)", the first item is:

VIII. Limiting Phenomenon
19. Space element

Later, the text explains space element (ākāsa-dhātu):

"Space, as understood in the Abhidhamma, is not bare geometric extension but the void region that delimits and separates objects and groups of material phenomena, enabling them to be perceived as distinct. The space element has the characteristic of delimiting matter. Its function is to display the boundaries of matter. It is manifested as the

confines of matter, or as the state of gaps and apertures. Its proximate cause is the matter delimited."

In simple words:

- *Space element is not "outer space with stars,"*
- *It is the little gaps between groups of Rūpa,*
- *It lets us say "this is one thing, that is another thing."*

Everyday examples:

- *Look at your fingers.*
    - *There is flesh (Rūpa) and gaps between fingers.*
    - *Those gaps are where space element is "doing its job" – marking boundaries.*
- *Look at houses in a street.*
    - *Each house is a group of matter.*
    - *The "nothing" between houses that lets you see them as separate buildings is like space element.*

Abhidhamma says this space element is a modality of matter, not a separate ultimate reality. It belongs to the group of non-concrete Rūpas that don't arise directly from kamma, mind, temperature, or nutriment.

So you can think:

> *Space element is like the "lines" between puzzle pieces – it doesn't exist on its own, but it makes the pieces appear separate.*

6.2 How the Body "Speaks": Bodily and Vocal Intimation

Next comes intimation.

In Table 6.1, we see:

> *IX. Communicating Phenomena*
> *20. Bodily intimation*
> *21. Vocal intimation*

The text then explains:

> *"Intimating material phenomena (viññattirūpa): Viññatti, intimation, is that by means of which one communicates one's ideas, feelings, and attitudes to another. There are two means of intimation, bodily and vocal."*

And it gives more detail:

- *Bodily intimation (kāya-viññatti):*
  - *Is a special modification in the consciousness-originated air element,*
  - *Causes the body to move in ways that reveal one's intentions.*
- *Vocal intimation (vācī-viññatti):*
  - *Is a special modification in the consciousness-originated earth element,*
  - *Issues in speech by which one reveals one's intentions.*

Both types:

- *Have the function of displaying intention,*
- *Are manifested as causes of bodily movement and verbal expression,*

- *Have as proximate causes the air element (for bodily intimation) and earth element born of consciousness (for vocal intimation).*

Simple picture:

- *When you wave your hand, that wave is not just "air element moving."*
    - *It is air element modified by mind so that others can see your intention – "hi!" or "come here."*
- *When you speak, it is not only sound.*
    - *It is earth element (in the vocal organs) modified by mind in a special way so that sound carries meaning.*

Abhidhamma calls these special modifications intimation Rūpas, because they are how mind uses body to communicate.

On the classification page, these two are also called "doors of action":

> *"Bodily and vocal intimation are doors of action, that is, channels for bodily and verbal deeds."*

So:

- *Sense doors (eye, ear, etc.) are how mind receives information.*
- *Intimation Rūpas are how mind sends out information through body and speech.*

6.3 Lightness, Softness, and Usefulness: Mutable Rūpas

Next we meet the mutable material phenomena (vikāra-rūpa).

Table 6.1 shows:

> *X. Mutable Phenomena*
> *22. Lightness*

23. Malleability

24. Wieldiness (plus two intimations)

The commentary explains this group:

> *"Mutable material phenomena (vikārarūpa): This category comprises special modes or manifestations of concretely produced matter. It includes the two types of intimation and three other material phenomena: lightness, malleability, and wieldiness."*

So these are ways matter can be – more light, more bendable, more workable.

Lightness (lahutā)

> *"Lightness (lahutā) has the characteristic of non-sluggishness. Its function is to dispell heaviness in matter. It is manifested as light transformability. Its proximate cause is light matter."*

Everyday feel:

- *Some mornings the body feels heavy, hard to move.*
- *Other times it feels light – easy to walk, run, stretch.*

Abhidhamma says this is partly the play of lightness Rūpa in the body.

Malleability (mudutā)

> *"Malleability (mudutā) has the characteristic of non-rigidity. Its function is to dispell rigidity in matter. It is manifested as non-opposition to any kind of action. Its proximate cause is malleable matter."*

Think of:

- *When your muscles are stiff, hard to bend – low malleability.*
- *When you warm up and stretch, your body feels soft and flexible – more malleability.*

Wieldiness (kammaññatā)

> *"Wieldiness (kammaññatā) has the characteristic of wieldiness that is favourable to bodily action. Its function is to dispell unwieldiness. It is manifested as non-weakness. Its proximate cause is wieldy matter."*

This is like the body being:

- *Ready and able to do what you intend,*
- *Not clumsy, not weak, but fit for use.*

Conditions for mutable Rūpas

Earlier, when speaking about these three, the manual connects them with conditions like climate, food, and mind. For example, good climate and proper food can make the body light, soft, and workable, while bad climate, poor food, or a disturbed mind can make it heavy, stiff, and unwieldy (this is discussed in the broader context of vikāra-rūpas, p. 241).

So you can reflect:

- *Climate – on very hot or cold days, the body can feel heavier or more awkward.*
- *Food – overeating can make the body sluggish; healthy food supports lightness.*
- *Mind – a cheerful, energetic mind often goes with a light, flexible, willing body, while depression or anger can make everything feel heavy and stiff.*

Abhidhamma puts these experiences into clear categories: lightness, malleability, wieldiness – all as special modes of matter.

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6.4 Arising, Continuity, Decay, Impermanence: Characteristics of Rūpa

Finally, we come to the characteristics of matter.

Table 6.1 lists:

> *XI. Characteristics of Matter*
> *25. Production*
> *26. Continuity*
> *27. Decay*
> *28. Impermanence*

The text explains:

> *"(11) Characteristics of material phenomena: material production, continuity, decay, and impermanence. Here by production and continuity are meant the material phenomenon of birth."*

So these four are like the "life stages" of Rūpa:

1. *Production (uppāda) – the arising or birth of matter*
2. *Continuity (ṭhiti / santati) – its brief ongoing presence*
3. *Decay (jaratā) – its ageing, weakening*
4. *Impermanence (aniccatā) – its final breaking up and disappearance*

Abhidhamma treats these as non-concrete Rūpas – not separate "things," but real aspects of how matter behaves, moment by moment.

Simple example with a bubble:

- *A bubble appears on the surface of water – production.*
- *It stays there for a short time – continuity.*

- *It becomes thinner, weaker – decay.*

- *It suddenly pops – impermanence.*

Abhidhamma says every Rūpa-group in your body is like that:

- *Arising*

- *Remaining for a tiny moment*

- *Ageing*

- *Breaking up*

Again and again and again.

Because these four are just ways of talking about the process of Rūpa, they are counted among the non-concrete matter, not as separate ultimate realities.

But they are still powerful reflections:

> *When you observe the body carefully, you are really watching production, continuity, decay, and impermanence of Rūpa all the time.*

Summary of Chapter 6

- *Abhidhamma speaks of ten "non-concretely produced" Rūpas, grouped as:*

    - *Limiting phenomenon – space element (ākāsa-dhātu), which delimits and separates material groups, showing their boundaries and gaps.*

    - *Communicating phenomena – bodily and vocal intimation, special modifications of air and earth element produced by consciousness, used to display intention through movement and speech.*

- *Mutable phenomena – lightness, malleability, wieldiness (plus the two intimations), which are modes of matter making the body light vs heavy, soft vs rigid, workable vs unwieldy.*

- *Characteristics of matter – production, continuity, decay, impermanence, the four stages of Rūpa's tiny "life."*

- *These ten do not arise directly from kamma, mind, temperature, or nutriment, but exist as attributes of concretely produced matter, so they are not counted as separate paramattha dhammas.*

- *Still, they give us a very clear way to understand:*

  - *How matter is separated in space*

  - *How body and speech communicate intention*

  - *How the body can be light, flexible, workable*

  - *And how all matter is constantly arising, continuing, decaying, and breaking up*

Reflection Questions

1. *Look at the space between your fingers or between objects on your desk.*

   - *Can you think of that "gap" as space element delimiting material groups?*

2. *Next time you talk with someone, notice your hand movements and voice.*

   - *How are these examples of bodily and vocal intimation – matter used to communicate intention?*

3. *Think about a day when your body felt light and flexible, and a day when it felt heavy and stiff.*

    - *How might lightness, malleability, and wieldiness be different in those two days?*

4. *When you watch your body breathe, or feel your heartbeat, can you reflect:*

    - *"These Rūpas are going through production, continuity, decay, impermanence all the time"?*

Next we can move to Chapter 7 – How Matter is Classified: Internal, External, Gross, Subtle..., where all these Rūpas are sorted into different technical pairs that help us understand them even more clearly.

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Chapter 7 – How Matter is Classified: Internal, External, Gross, Subtle…

By now, you've met many kinds of Rūpa (matter):

- *Four great essentials*
- *Sense organs and sense objects*
- *Sex, heart-base, life faculty, nutriment*
- *Space, intimation, lightness, change…*

Abhidhamma doesn't just list them.
It also organises them in clever ways, using different pairs and groups, to help us see reality more clearly.

In this chapter we'll look at some of these ways of classifying Rūpa:

- *Internal / external*
- *Bases / doors*
- *Faculties*
- *Gross / subtle, impinging / non-impinging*
- *Clung-to / not clung-to*
- *Inseparable Rūpas and the pure octad*

Think of it like sorting Lego pieces:

- *By colour (red, blue, yellow)*
- *By size (big, small)*

- *By function (wheels, windows, doors)*

The pieces are the same, but different sorting systems help you understand and use them better.

7.1 Internal vs External Rūpa (Ajjhattika / Bahiddhā)

In the classification section of Chapter VI, A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma explains "internal" (ajjhattika) and "external" (bahiddhā) matter in a very technical way.

It says that "internal" refers only to the five sense-bases:

- *Eye-sensitivity*
- *Ear-sensitivity*
- *Nose-sensitivity*
- *Tongue-sensitivity*
- *Body-sensitivity*

These are the five pasāda-rūpas we studied before. The text explains that the term "internal" is used:

> *"...in a technical sense applicable only to the five types of sensitive materiality which serve as the doors for the mental phenomena. Accordingly, only these five sensitive factors are referred to as internal."*

So in Abhidhamma:

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- *Internal Rūpa = only the five sense-bases*

- *External Rūpa = everything else*

This is different from everyday speech, where we call the whole body "inside" and the world "outside". Here, the "inside" that really matters is just the five delicate points where mind and matter meet.

Reflection:

- *When you think "my body is me," Abhidhamma gently says:*

    - *"Technically, only five tiny sensitive Rūpas are 'internal' – everything else, even most of your body, counts as 'external'."*

This can soften the sense of a solid inner self living in a big "me-body."

7.2 Bases (Vatthu) and Doors (Dvārā)

Another helpful classification is into bases and doors.

The manual explains that "bases" (vatthu) are material supports for consciousness:

- *The five sense-bases (eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, body-sensitivity) are bases for sense-consciousness.*

- *The heart-base (hadaya-vatthu) is the base for many other cittas, especially mind-door processes.*

So the six bases on the material side are:

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1. *Eye-base – eye-sensitivity*
2. *Ear-base – ear-sensitivity*
3. *Nose-base – nose-sensitivity*
4. *Tongue-base – tongue-sensitivity*
5. *Body-base – body-sensitivity*
6. *Heart-base – material base for mind-door cittas*

A door (dvāra) is a channel or opening through which consciousness arises to its object. The text says that the five sensitivities are:

> *"doors of cognition, that is, media for consciousness and mental factors to access their corresponding objects."*

So:

- *Eye-sensitivity is both eye-base and eye-door for seeing*
- *Ear-sensitivity is both ear-base and ear-door for hearing*
- *… and so on for nose, tongue, and body*

The mind-door is based on heart-base; through this door, mind knows ideas, memories, mental objects.

Short picture:

- *Base = where citta "stands"*
- *Door = through what channel it "looks out"*

In every moment of experience:

- *Citta arises on a base,*
- *Through a door,*
- *Knowing some object.*

And the bases and doors are all kinds of Rūpa.

7.3 Faculties (Indriya) on the Rūpa Side

Abhidhamma also talks about faculties (indriya) – things that "exercise control" in their own fields.

The manual lists material faculties including:

- *The five sense faculties: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body*
- *The sex faculty*
- *The life faculty*

About the sex faculty, it says:

> *"The sex faculty controls the manifestation of masculine or feminine features and traits, so that the whole personality tends towards either femininity or masculinity."*

About the life faculty, it says:

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"The material life faculty maintains and preserves the other material phenomena in the body, as a pilot controls and preserves his ship."

So, on the Rūpa side, the faculties include:

1. *Eye faculty – controls eye sensitivity*
2. *Ear faculty*
3. *Nose faculty*
4. *Tongue faculty*
5. *Body faculty*
6. *Sex faculty (femininity or masculinity)*
7. *Life faculty (rūpa-jīvitindriya)*

These Rūpas have strong "controlling" functions:

- *Sense faculties control the reception of objects at each sense-door.*
- *Sex faculty controls the body's masculine or feminine pattern.*
- *Life faculty controls the survival of its Rūpa-group.*

Again, all of this is just conditioned matter – no owner, no soul – only functions working in their fields.

7.4 Gross vs Subtle; Impinging vs Non-Impinging; Near vs Far

The manual also uses some special pairs: gross / subtle, impinging / non-impinging, near / far.

In the classification section, it explains these terms:

> *"The expressions gross, subtle, impinging, non-impinging, near, and distant are used in a technical sense only with reference to material phenomena that are instrumental in the genesis of sense-consciousness."*

It continues (summary):

- *Gross, impinging, near Rūpas are those that directly help produce a moment of sense-consciousness.*

- *Subtle, non-impinging, distant Rūpas are those that do not directly play a role there, even if they are physically big or close.*

So "gross" here does not mean "big" in size, and "subtle" does not mean "tiny."

Instead:

- *Rūpas like sense-bases and sense-objects in active contact are called gross, impinging, near, because they are directly involved in seeing, hearing, etc.*

- *Other Rūpas (like space, sex-quality, life faculty, etc.) in that moment are subtle, non-impinging, distant, because they are not essential in that specific sense-citta arising.*

Example:

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You look at a flower.

- *In that moment of seeing:*
    - *Eye-sensitivity and visible form are gross, impinging, near.*
    - *Sex Rūpa, nutriment Rūpa in your body are still present, but they are subtle, non-impinging, distant for that particular seeing citta.*

This classification helps meditators focus on which Rūpas matter most for each kind of consciousness.

7.5 Clung-to vs Not-Clung-to (Upādinna / Anupādinna) Rūpa

Another important pair in Abhidhamma is "clung-to" (upādinna) and "not-clung-to" (anupādinna) material phenomena.

The manual's classification section (Chapter VI) discusses these terms when listing ways to group matter. In brief:

- *Clung-to Rūpa (upādinna-rūpa) is matter that is appropriated by craving and wrong view – especially the kamma-born matter of one's own body, which we strongly take as "I" or "mine."*
- *Not-clung-to Rūpa (anupādinna-rūpa) is matter not so appropriated – such as much of the external world, and also some internal matter that is not strongly taken as self.*

From an Abhidhamma perspective, there is no real "owner" either way – all Rūpa is just conditioned, insentient phenomena. But:

- *When Rūpa is tightly grasped by craving and views ("This is my body," "This is me"), it is classified as clung-to.*

- *Seeing clearly that even "my" body is just upādinna-rūpa can help weaken this clinging.*

So this pair is not just theory; it is meant to support:

- *Insight into non-self (anattā)*
- *Less attachment to the physical body and its appearance*

7.6 Inseparable Rūpa: The Eight Inseparables and the Pure Octad

Finally, Abhidhamma also classifies matter by what is inseparable – which Rūpas always appear together in the same group.

In the section on "inseparable material phenomena", the manual says that:

- *The four great essentials plus the four "derived" qualities – colour, odour, taste, and nutritive essence – are called "inseparable", because they are always found together in any material group.*

This set of eight is sometimes called the "pure octad" (suddhaṭṭhaka):

1. *Earth element*
2. *Water element*
3. *Fire element*
4. *Air element*
5. *Colour*
6. *Odour*

7. *Taste*

8. *Nutritive essence*

These eight form the basic packet of matter. Other Rūpas (like eye-sensitivity, sound, life faculty, etc.) are added on to this octad to form larger Rūpa-groups (kalāpas) – such as:

- *Sense-basis decads (pure octad + life faculty + a sense-basis)*
- *Sex decads (pure octad + life faculty + sex Rūpa)*
- *Base decad (pure octad + life faculty + heart-base)*

Why call them "inseparable"?

Because:

- *You never find colour Rūpa without some earth, water, fire, air, odour, taste, and nutritive essence.*
- *You never have taste floating by itself, with no underlying material element.*

So every bit of matter, large or small, is at least a "pure octad" – eight Rūpas arising and falling away together.

This classification prepares us for deeper study of Rūpa-groups in the next chapter.

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Summary of Chapter 7

- *Abhidhamma classifies Rūpa in many ways to support clear understanding and insight.*

- *Internal vs external:*

    - *Internal Rūpa = only the five sense-bases (pasāda-rūpa).*

    - *All other Rūpa is technically external.*

- *Bases and doors:*

    - *Eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, body-sensitivity and heart-base are bases (vatthu) for consciousness.*

    - *The five sensitivities also function as doors (dvārā) for sense cognition; heart-base supports the mind-door.*

- *Faculties (indriya) on the Rūpa side include the five sense faculties, sex faculty, and life faculty, which "control" their respective fields.*

- *Gross / subtle, impinging / non-impinging, near / far:*

    - *These are technical terms referring to whether Rūpas directly help produce sense-consciousness.*

- *Clung-to vs not-clung-to:*

    - *Clung-to Rūpa is appropriated by craving and views, chiefly the kamma-born body.*

    - *Not-clung-to Rūpa is not so appropriated.*

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- *Inseparable Rūpas and pure octad:*

    - *The four great essentials plus colour, odour, taste, nutritive essence form the eight inseparable Rūpas.*

    - *These form the basic packet from which larger Rūpa-groups (octads, nonads, decads) are built.*

All these classifications are like different lenses for looking at the same thing – matter as it really is: conditioned, changing, and ownerless.

Reflection Questions

1. *How does it change your feeling about "my body" when you learn that only five tiny sensitivities are called "internal", and the rest is "external" in Abhidhamma?*
2. *When you see or hear something, can you pause and ask:*
    - *"On what base is this citta standing?"*
    - *"Through which door is it knowing the object?"*
3. *Think about one part of your body you're very attached to (for example, your face).*
    - *How might Abhidhamma classify this as clung-to Rūpa?*
4. *Can you imagine your body as made of tiny packets of eight inseparable Rūpas (pure octads), instead of one solid lump?*

If you're ready, next we can go into Chapter 8 – The Four Origins of Matter: Kamma, Citta, Utu, Āhāra, and see how all this Rūpa actually arises in the first place.

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Chapter 8 – The Four Origins of Matter: Kamma, Citta, Utu, Āhāra

If you look at your body right now, it might feel like one solid thing.

But in Abhidhamma, the body is more like a busy city:

- *New buildings are being built,*
- *Old ones are breaking down,*
- *Energy and food are flowing in,*
- *Weather is changing the environment,*
- *And laws and decisions (kamma) shape what appears.*

The Compendium of Matter in the Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha says that material phenomena arise in four ways:

> *Matter originates from kamma, consciousness (citta), temperature (utu), and nutriment (āhāra).*

So Rūpa does not appear by itself.
It always has conditions behind it.

In this chapter we will meet these four origins in a simple way.

8.1 Rūpa Is Conditioned – It Never Just "Pops Up"

Earlier, the text said:

- *All matter is "with conditions",*
- *Because it arises depending on "the four causes" (kamma, citta, utu, āhāra).*

So, whenever there is a bit of Rūpa:

- *Some past action (kamma) may be behind it,*
- *Or some present mental event (citta),*
- *Or temperature conditions (heat / cold),*
- *Or nutritive essence from food.*

Often, several of these causes are working together.

Later in the chapter, a Pāli verse summarises the numbers of Rūpas that can arise from each cause:

> *"Eighteen, fifteen, thirteen, and twelve arise respectively from kamma, consciousness, temperature, and nutriment."*

The commentary then explains in detail which Rūpas each cause can produce (heart-base, faculties, sound, lightness, etc.).

For now, we will focus on understanding the idea, not memorising all the numbers.

8.2 Kamma-Born Rūpa – The "Kamma Body"

The text explains kamma-born material phenomena like this:

- *The Pāli phrase is kamma-samuṭṭhāna-rūpa – "material phenomena originating from kamma."*
- *Here kamma means volition (cetanā) in past wholesome and unwholesome cittas.*
- *Twenty-five kinds of kamma (from certain wholesome and unwholesome cittas) can produce Rūpa.*

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- *These kamma-born Rūpas start from the rebirth-linking (paṭisandhi) moment and continue throughout life, arising moment by moment.*

The text says that, for a human:

- *At conception, kamma produces Rūpa-groups (kalāpas) such as:*
    - *Eye-decad (pure octad + life faculty + eye-sensitivity)*
    - *Ear-decad, nose-decad, tongue-decad, body-decad*
    - *Female-decad or male-decad (depending on sex)*
    - *Heart-base decad (pure octad + life + heart-base)*
    - *Vital nonad (pure octad + life faculty)*

Then it says clearly: "These nine groups originate from kamma."

So, kamma-born Rūpa includes:

- *The eight inseparable Rūpas (four great elements + colour, odour, taste, nutritive essence),*
- *The five sense-bases (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body sensitivity),*
- *The two sex-qualities (femininity, masculinity),*
- *The heart-base,*
- *The material life faculty.*

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In daily life, you can think:

- *Your basic body structure,*
- *Your sense organs,*
- *Your being male or female,*
- *Your heart-base,*
- *And the "life" of your body-matter*

are all being carried and renewed by kamma-born Rūpa.

It is like a hidden blueprint from past volitional actions, constantly building and maintaining this living body.

But in Abhidhamma, even this "kamma-made body" is not a self:

It is just the result of past volition, arising and passing away in tiny groups.

8.3 Citta-Born Rūpa – How Mind Moves the Body and Produces Sound

Next is citta-samuṭṭhāna-rūpa – material phenomena originating from consciousness.

The text says:

- *Seventy-five types of consciousness (excluding certain immaterial and sense-resultant cittas) can produce consciousness-born matter.*
- *They start doing this from the moment of the first bhavaṅga citta (the first life-continuum) right after rebirth-linking.*

- *Rebirth consciousness itself does not produce citta-born matter – at rebirth, the first matter is only kamma-born.*

Then it explains what citta does to matter:

- *Certain cittas maintain the body postures – sitting, standing, walking, lying.*
- *Other cittas produce bodily and vocal intimation (the Rūpas that show bodily actions and speech).*
- *Cittas associated with joy can even produce smiling.*

So, mind-born Rūpa is especially connected with:

- *Bodily action (moving hands, walking, changing posture),*
- *Verbal action (producing speech sounds),*
- *Some types of sound,*
- *And the ongoing adjustment of the body as mind acts.*

Everyday picture:

- *You decide to wave at a friend – that volition and the associated cittas produce bodily intimation Rūpas causing your arm to move.*
- *You decide to say "hello" – appropriate cittas produce vocal intimation Rūpas and sound Rūpas to carry your voice.*
- *When you sit up straighter or lie down out of intention, cittas are producing matter that upholds the posture.*

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So your body is not just a passive shell built by kamma.
Every moment, mind is also reshaping it through citta-born Rūpa.

8.4 Utu-Born Rūpa – Temperature as a Builder

Third comes utu-samuṭṭhāna-rūpa – material phenomena originating from temperature.

The manual explains that:

- *Temperature here means both internal body heat and external heat (climate, fire, sunshine, etc.).*
- *Fire element (tejo-dhātu) – experienced as heat or cold – is the key.*
- *When temperature conditions are suitable, they produce new material groups.*

Later, in a summary passage, the text says:

- *Sound is born from consciousness and temperature.*
- *The triple qualities of lightness, malleability, and wieldiness arise from temperature, consciousness, and nutriment (not from kamma alone).*
- *The inseparable Rūpas and space element arise from all four causes.*

So temperature-born Rūpa is involved in:

- *Climatic and geological changes,*
- *The body's internal heat,*
- *Sounds produced by non-living things (wind, thunder, knocking objects),*

- *And supporting the lightness / heaviness, flexibility / stiffness, usefulness / clumsiness of the body.*

Everyday examples:

- *On a very cold day, your body may feel heavy, stiff, and slow – temperature conditions affect mutable Rūpas like lightness and malleability.*

- *When metal expands in heat and contracts in cold, that is temperature working on Rūpa.*

- *The sound of thunder or a clap of two stones is temperature (and impact) producing sound Rūpa without any speech or intention.*

Abhidhamma weaves all of this into its list of Rūpa origins.

8.5 Nutriment-Born Rūpa – How Food Keeps the Body Going

The fourth origin is āhāra-samuṭṭhāna-rūpa – material phenomena originating from nutriment.

We already met nutriment Rūpa (āhāra-rūpa) as nutritive essence (ojā).

In the section on nutriment, the manual says:

- *Edible food as nutriment sustains the body.*

- *In the Abhidhamma method, nutriment sustains and also produces material phenomena in the body.*

- *Nutriment, known as nutritive essence, on reaching its presence, produces nutriment-originated material phenomena at the time it is swallowed.*

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Later, another passage explains:

- *Internal nutritive essence, supported by external food, produces several successive "pure octads" (basic Rūpa-groups) in the body.*
- *Food taken by the mother can even originate materiality in the child.*
- *Even food smeared on the body is said to originate materiality.*

So nutriment-born matter:

- *Starts to arise when food is swallowed and digested,*
- *Produces new Rūpa-groups (kalāpas), usually based on the pure octad,*
- *Helps continue the body for many hours or days from a single meal.*

Simple image:

You eat lunch:

1. *The food is digested;*
2. *Its nutritive essence becomes āhāra-rūpa inside the body;*
3. *This nutritive essence produces new material groups – more tiny octads – like adding small bricks to the building of the body.*

The text says that nutriment taken on one day can support the body for up to seven days. So even when you are not eating, that nutriment-born Rūpa is still helping to keep the body going.

8.6 Putting It Together: Who Produces What?

The manual gives a neat summary:

- *Heart-base and the eight material faculties (five sense-faculties, two sex-faculties, life faculty) are born of kamma alone.*

- *The two intimations (bodily and vocal) are born only of consciousness.*

- *Sound is born from consciousness and temperature (speech vs inanimate sounds).*

- *The triple qualities – lightness, malleability, wieldiness – arise from temperature, consciousness, and nutriment.*

- *The inseparable Rūpas (four great elements + colour, odour, taste, nutritive essence) and space element arise from all four causes.*

- *The four characteristic Rūpas (production, continuity, decay, impermanence) do not arise from any cause, because they are not "things" but ways of describing the process of Rūpa.*

Then the verse:

> *"Eighteen, fifteen, thirteen, and twelve*
> *arise respectively from kamma, consciousness, temperature, and nutriment."*

This means:

- *18 types of Rūpa can be kamma-born,*

- *15 can be citta-born,*

- *13 can be temperature-born,*

- *12 can be nutriment-born.*

You don't need to memorise the whole mapping right now.

What matters is the feeling:

> *This body is not one thing.*
> *It is many types of Rūpa, arising from four kinds of causes, again and again, like a lamp flame being fed by oil, wick, and air.*

Summary of Chapter 8

- *Abhidhamma teaches that Rūpa is conditioned, never independent.*

- *Material phenomena originate in four ways:*

1. *Kamma-born Rūpa – past volitional actions producing body structure, sense organs, sex, heart-base, life faculty, etc., starting from rebirth-linking and continuing through life.*

2. *Citta-born Rūpa – mind producing bodily and vocal action, postures, some sounds, and other movement-related matter.*

3. *Utu-born Rūpa – internal and external temperature producing new matter, including some sounds and the lightness / flexibility / usefulness of the body.*

4. *Āhāra-born Rūpa – nutritive essence from food producing new material groups, sustaining the body for days.*

- *Some Rūpas can arise from one cause only (e.g., heart-base from kamma), some from two or three, some from all four (inseparables and space).*

- *The text sums up: 18 Rūpas arise from kamma, 15 from citta, 13 from temperature, 12 from nutriment.*

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Seeing this, the body becomes less like "me" and more like a complex, conditioned process:

Past actions, present mind, temperature, and food
all working together to build and rebuild this changing heap of Rūpa.

Reflection Questions

1. *When you look at your body, can you imagine:*
    - *"This part is mostly kamma-born (sense organs, sex, heart-base, life faculty).*
    - *This movement is citta-born.*
    - *This warmth and heaviness is influenced by temperature.*
    - *This growth and strength come from nutriment."*
2. *Think of one simple action, like raising your hand to greet someone.*
    - *Which part is mind (Nāma)?*
    - *Which Rūpa might be kamma-born?*
    - *Which Rūpa is mind-born?*
3. *When you eat your next meal, can you reflect:*
    - *"This food becomes nutritive essence, which will produce new Rūpas, helping this body continue for some time."*
4. *How does understanding these four origins of Rūpa weaken the feeling that the body is a solid, permanent self?*

If you're ready, next we can explore Chapter 9 – Rūpa Groups (Rūpa-kalāpa) and How They Occur in Life, where we will see how these different Rūpas always appear in groups, like tiny packets, rather than alone.

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Chapter 9 – Rūpa Groups (Rūpa-kalāpa) and How They Occur in Life

Imagine you pour sugar on a table.

To your eyes, it looks like one white pile.
But if you zoom in with a microscope, you see many tiny crystals.

Abhidhamma says our body and the whole material world are like that:

- *We see "one body," "one chair," "one tree."*
- *But really, there are countless tiny groups of Rūpa, arising and passing away very fast.*

These tiny packets are called Rūpa-kalāpa – material groups.

In this chapter, we'll see:

- *Why Abhidhamma talks about groups instead of single Rūpas*
- *What the pure octad and vital nonad are*
- *How groups are arranged by origin (kamma, citta, temperature, nutriment)*
- *How these groups show up in daily life and different kinds of birth*

9.1 Why Rūpa Comes in Groups, Not Alone

In A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma, after explaining the four origins of matter, the text says:

> *"There are twenty-one material groups inasmuch as they arise together, cease together, have a common basis, and occur together... Material phenomena do not occur singly, but in combinations or groups known as Rūpa-kalāpas, of which twenty-one are enumerated."*

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So:

- *Rūpas don't arise one by one, like single dots.*
- *They arise in little packets (groups) called kalāpas.*
- *Everything in one group:*
    - *Arises together*
    - *Ceases together*
    - *Has a common base – the four great essentials in that group are the proximate cause for the derived Rūpas there.*

Simple picture:

Think of a team:

- *Players run onto the field together,*
- *Play the game together,*
- *And leave together.*

A Rūpa-group is like a tiny team of Rūpas. They arise, live for a tiny moment, and vanish as a unit.

The text says there are 21 types of groups altogether.
We don't need to memorize every type yet. First, we just need to understand how groups are built.

9.2 The Inseparable Eight and the Pure Octad

Earlier we saw that eight Rūpas are always found together:

- *Four great essentials:*

    1. *Earth element*
    2. *Water element*
    3. *Fire element*
    4. *Air element*

- *Four derived qualities:*

    5. *Colour*
    6. *Odour*
    7. *Taste*
    8. *Nutritive essence (ojā)*

The classification section calls these the eight inseparable material phenomena:

> *"Colour, odour, taste, nutritive essence, and the four essentials are the eight kinds of material phenomena that are inseparable; the rest are separable."*

They are also called avinibbhoga-rūpa – inseparable Rūpa.

When they appear just by themselves, they form a group called the pure octad (suddhaṭṭhaka). The text says:

> *"The inseparable material phenomena constitute the 'pure octad.'"*

So any living or non-living matter has at least this packet of 8:

> *Pure octad = 4 great elements + colour + odour + taste + nutritive essence.*

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No Rūpa appears more "naked" than this.

Everyday example:

- *A tiny dust particle you can barely see*
- *A small drop of water*
- *The cells in your skin*

All of them are (at minimum) a pure octad – eight Rūpas arising and falling away together.

9.3 Vital Nonad and Other Key Groups

When new life begins, Rūpa-groups don't appear as bare octads only. They quickly get extra members.

The text explains important kamma-born groups:

> *"Life and the (eight) inseparable material phenomena together with the eye are called the eye decad... Similarly... the ear decad, nose decad, tongue decad, body decad, female decad, male decad, (heart-)base decad... Inseparable material phenomena, together with life, are called the vital nonad. These nine groups originate from kamma."*

Let's unpack that.

Vital nonad (jīvitindriya + octad)

- *Start with the pure octad (8 inseparables).*
- *Add material life faculty (rūpa-jīvitindriya).*

8 + 1 = 9 Rūpas → this group is called the vital nonad (jīvitindriya-navaka).

It is "vital" because life faculty is present, like a tiny power-line keeping this packet of matter "alive" for its micro-second.

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This group is so important that in non-percipient beings (those without consciousness) it is the only group at rebirth:

> *"In the case of non-percipient beings, only the vital nonad becomes established in the way of rebirth-linking... The 'vital nonad' is the group of material phenomena containing the life faculty, i.e. organic matter."*

So, in some realms, an entire "being" is just this one kind of Rūpa-group.

The sense-base decads and other decads

Now take pure octad + life faculty + one more special Rūpa:

- *Eye decad = 8 inseparables + life + eye-sensitivity*
- *Ear decad = 8 inseparables + life + ear-sensitivity*
- *Nose decad*
- *Tongue decad*
- *Body decad*
- *Female decad (sex faculty – femininity)*
- *Male decad (sex faculty – masculinity)*
- *Heart-base decad (hadaya-vatthu)*

Each of these has 10 Rūpas, so they're called decads (dasa-kalāpa).

Together with the vital nonad, these are the nine kamma-born groups.

Simple analogy:

- *Pure octad = basic "cookie dough"*

- *Add life = vital nonad (living dough)*
- *Add eye-sensitivity on top = eye decad (dough shaped as an eye-organ group)*
- *Add sex Rūpa = female or male decad*
- *Add heart-base = heart-base decad*

All of these are still just Rūpa, built from the same eight inseparables plus some extras.

9.4 Groups by Origin: Kamma, Citta, Utu, Āhāra

The text then gives a clear list of 21 groups, sorted by which cause produces them:

> *"There are twenty-one material groups—nine, six, four, and two—produced in due order from kamma, consciousness, temperature, and nutriment."*

9 kamma-born groups

Already seen:

1. *Eye decad*
2. *Ear decad*
3. *Nose decad*
4. *Tongue decad*
5. *Body decad*
6. *Female decad*

7. *Male decad*

8. *Heart-base decad*

9. *Vital nonad*

These are the backbone of a living body, present from rebirth-linking onward (with some variations by realm and type of birth).

6 consciousness-born groups

The manual then lists:

> *"The six groups produced by consciousness are:*
> *(1) the pure octad;*
> *(2) the bodily intimation decad;*
> *(3) the vocal intimation decad;*
> *(4) the lightness triad un-decad;*
> *(5) the bodily intimation and lightness triad dodecad;*
> *(6) the vocal intimation, sound, and lightness triad tridecad."*

In more casual language:

- *Pure octad – mind can produce just this basic packet.*
- *Bodily intimation nonad/decad – octad + bodily intimation (sometimes counted as 9 or 10 depending on context).*
- *Vocal intimation decad – octad + vocal intimation + sound.*
- *Groups that include the lightness triad (lightness, malleability, wieldiness), sometimes plus intimation and sound, reaching 11, 12, or 13 Rūpas total.*

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These are how citta (mind) produces:

- *Postures,*
- *Gestures,*
- *Speech,*
- *And makes the body light, flexible, and usable.*

4 temperature-born groups

> *"The four groups produced by temperature are:*
> *(1) the pure octad;*
> *(2) the sound nonad;*
> *(3) the lightness triad un-decad;*
> *(4) the sound and lightness triad dodecad."*

So temperature can produce:

- *Basic pure octads (e.g., in external matter)*
- *Groups with sound (like thunder, banging objects)*
- *Groups with lightness triad, making matter lighter or more workable*
- *Groups with sound + lightness triad*

And this can happen both inside the body and outside:

> *"Of them, the two material groups produced by temperature—the pure octad and the sound nonad—are found externally too. All the rest are strictly internal."*

2 nutriment-born groups

Finally:

> *"The two groups produced by nutriment are:*
> *(1) the pure octad;*
> *(2) the lightness triad un-decad."*

Another passage adds:

> *"The pure octad and the un-decad of the lightness triad are the two material groups that originate from nutriment."*

So food gives rise to:

- *Fresh packets of pure octad*

- *Some groups that are octad + lightness triad (the body becomes lighter and more workable with proper nutrition)*

The manual then compares the flow of these groups in the sensuous world to:

> *"...the continuity of material groups produced in four ways... uninterruptedly flows on in the sense sphere till the end of life, like the flame of a lamp or the stream of a river."*

So your body is like:

> *A stream of Rūpa-groups (kamma-, citta-, utu-, āhāra-born)*
> *flowing without a gap, from conception to death.*

9.5 Internal vs External Groups

In Chapter 7, we saw that:

- *Only the five sense-bases are technically called internal Rūpa;*

- *All other Rūpas are external.*

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Now, when we look at Rūpa-groups, something similar appears:

- *The text explains that among the temperature-born groups, the pure octad and sound nonad are found externally too, while "all the rest are strictly internal."*

This means:

- *Many groups are inside a living body (internal in a looser sense).*

- *Some can also be outside, in "dead matter" like a stone or a bell (especially temperature-produced pure octads and sound groups).*

But in the technical sense of "internal" used for classification, it is still the sense-bases that are called internal Rūpa, even though their groups (decads) contain many elements.

All this classification helps us see:

- *What kind of Rūpa-groups are active in our body,*

- *What kind might be in external objects,*

- *How the same types of groups can appear both inside and outside depending on origin.*

Summary of Chapter 9

- *Rūpas never arise alone; they come in groups (Rūpa-kalāpas). The text says there are 21 kinds of groups, and that "material phenomena do not occur singly, but in combinations or groups known as Rūpa-kalāpas."*

- *Each group arises together, ceases together, has a common basis, with the conascent great essentials as the proximate cause for the derived Rūpas.*

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- *The pure octad (suddhaṭṭhaka) is made of 8 inseparable Rūpas: four great elements + colour, odour, taste, nutritive essence.*

- *Adding life faculty gives the vital nonad, and adding a faculty like eye-sensitivity, sex Rūpa, or heart-base gives various decads (eye decad, female decad, heart-base decad, etc.). These nine are the kamma-born groups.*

- *There are 6 consciousness-born, 4 temperature-born, and 2 nutriment-born groups, together making 21 groups by origin.*

- *These groups flow on without interruption in the sensuous world "like the flame of a lamp or the stream of a river," from rebirth-linking to death.*

We now see that what we call "body" is really:

A constantly changing stream of tiny Rūpa-groups,
built from the same basic packets,
driven by kamma, mind, temperature, and food.

Reflection Questions

1. *Imagine your body made of billions of Rūpa-groups, each like a little team arising and vanishing.*
    - *How does this image change your feeling of "I am this body"?*
2. *The pure octad is the basic packet of matter; the vital nonad adds life; the decads add things like eye, sex, or heart-base.*
    - *Can you think of an analogy in daily life (like food recipes, computer parts, Lego sets) that helps you remember this?*
3. *The text says the continuity of Rūpa-groups flows on like a river.*

- *If the body is like a river of Rūpa, is there any fixed "self" in it?*

4. *Look around you – at a table, a plant, your own hand.*

    - *Can you imagine different Rūpa-groups by origin working there (kamma-born in your body, temperature-born in the table, etc.)?*

If you'd like to continue, next we can look at Chapter 10 – How Rūpa Occurs in Worlds, Lifetimes, and Moments, where we see how matter appears in different realms, through the whole course of a life, and at the time of death.

Chapter 10 – How Rūpa Happens in Worlds, Lifetimes, and Moments

In the last chapters, we looked at what Rūpa (matter) is and how it arises from four causes.
Now we ask a new question:

> *Where and when does Rūpa actually happen?*
> *In which worlds? Through a whole lifetime? And what happens to Rūpa at death?*

The Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha explains this in the section called "The Occurrence of Material Phenomena" (paras. 23–29, Chapter VI).

We will explore this in simple language, but stay close to the Abhidhamma explanations.

10.1 Rūpa in the Human and Other Sensuous Realms

The Buddha's teaching speaks of three big planes of existence:

1. *Kāma-loka (sensuous plane) – beings still strongly tied to sense-pleasures.*
2. *Rūpa-loka (fine-material plane) – beings with very subtle bodies.*
3. *Arūpa-loka (immaterial plane) – beings with no Rūpa at all, only Citta and Cetasikā.*

Our focus in this chapter is mainly on Kāma-loka and Rūpa-loka, plus a special case:
non-percipient beings (asaññā-satta).

In the sensuous plane, Abhidhamma lists:

- *4 woeful realms – hell, animals, petas (hungry ghosts), and asuras (tormented titans)*

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- *7 blissful sensuous realms – humans and six heavenly realms*

Every being in these realms has Rūpa (a body of some kind). In the sensuous plane,
Rūpa arises in four ways:

1. *Kamma-born Rūpa – e.g. sense-organs, sex, heart-base, life-faculty.*

2. *Citta-born Rūpa – especially bodily and verbal actions, and some sounds.*

3. *Utu-born Rūpa (temperature-born) – matter produced by heat/cold.*

4. *Āhāra-born Rūpa (nutriment-born) – matter produced by nutritive essence.*

The manual says that groups of Rūpa (Rūpa-kalāpa) produced by these four causes
flow on continuously "like a lamp's flame or the stream of a river" throughout life—
we'll look at this more in the next section.

Everyday picture

Imagine a human:

- *Your eyes, ears, heart-base, sex, life-faculty → kamma-born Rūpa.*

- *When you raise your hand or speak a word → new citta-born Rūpa (intimation, sound).*

- *Your body temperature, warmth in your hands, etc. → utu-born Rūpa.*

- *The way food slowly strengthens your body → āhāra-born Rūpa.*

So even in one simple human life, Rūpa is always happening, supported by different causes, moment after moment.

10.2 The Continuity of Rūpa in a Lifetime

The Abhidhamma describes very precisely how Rūpa continues during life.

In the sensuous plane, starting from rebirth-linking (paṭisandhi):

- *Kamma-born Rūpa begins at rebirth, with certain basic groups.*
- *Citta-born Rūpa starts from the second moment of consciousness.*
- *Temperature-born Rūpa starts at the stage of "presence" of the first Rūpa.*
- *Nutriment-born Rūpa starts when nutritive essence spreads in the body.*

Then, in the sensuous world, the text says that these four streams of Rūpa-groups flow on unbroken until the end of life, like:

- *a line of lamp flames, or*
- *a river current.*

This is very important:

> *There is no single Rūpa that lasts the whole life.*
> *There is only a continuous series of tiny Rūpa-groups arising and vanishing.*

Simple analogy

Think of:

- *A video on your phone – it looks like one continuous motion, but is actually many still frames shown very fast.*

- *Your body – it looks like "one same body," but Abhidhamma says it's a fast stream of new Rūpa-groups, arising and passing away.*

We don't see this directly, but wise contemplation and meditation can gradually help us sense this flow, at least as an idea first.

10.3 What Happens to Rūpa at Death?

The manual gives a clear description of Rūpa at the time of death in the sensuous plane.

It says that, near death:

- *Kamma-born Rūpa stops arising starting from the stage of presence of the 17th citta before the death-consciousness.*

- *The kamma-born Rūpas that arose earlier continue until the exact death-moment, then they cease.*

- *After that, citta-born and āhāra-born Rūpas also come to cessation.*

- *Only temperature-born Rūpa continues for a while as the corpse— a stream of temperature-produced matter.*

The text then adds:

> *In a new life, for the deceased beings, Rūpa arises again starting from rebirth-linking, in the same way as before.*

So you can imagine:

1. *In this life, Rūpa flows like a river – kamma, citta, temperature, and nutriment all playing their parts.*

2. *At death, that particular river stops; citta and most types of Rūpa cease.*

3. *The corpse is just temperature-born Rūpa for some time.*

4. *If there is rebirth, a new stream of Rūpa begins from a new rebirth-linking consciousness, in a suitable realm.*

Gentle reflection

We often think, "This is my body, and it is one solid thing."

Abhidhamma invites us to see instead:

- *A body-process beginning at conception,*
- *flowing through life as ever-changing Rūpa-groups,*
- *breaking up at death,*
- *and maybe restarting in a new realm with a new body-process.*

This helps loosen the idea "this body is me" and supports insight into anicca, dukkha, anattā.

10.4 Rūpa in the Fine-Material and Non-Percipient Realms

(a) Rūpa in the Fine-Material World (Rūpa-loka)

In the fine-material plane, there are very refined Brahmā-worlds, connected with jhāna states.
Beings there still have Rūpa, but much more subtle than in the sensuous plane.

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The Abhidhamma explains that in the Rūpa-loka:

- *Certain Rūpa-groups do not occur, such as*
    - *nose-sensitivity, tongue-sensitivity, body-sensitivity*
    - *sex Rūpas (femininity, masculinity)*
    - *and nutriment-born groups.*

Because of this:

- *At rebirth in the fine-material realm, only certain kamma-born groups arise, such as those containing eye-base, ear-base, heart-base, and life-faculty.*
- *During the course of existence, there are citta-born and temperature-born groups,*
  but no āhāra-born groups, since there is no gross eating as in human life.

So a Brahmā-body is:

- *Simpler – fewer types of Rūpa,*
- *More subtle – no heavy sense-contact with smell, taste, touch, and no sex-difference.*

(b) Rūpa Among Non-Percipient Beings (Asaññā-satta)

There is a special realm called "non-percipient beings" (asaññā-satta) inside the fine-material plane.

The manual says:

- *For non-percipient beings, at rebirth only the "vital nonad"*
  (a group of Rūpa containing life-faculty) is established.

- *Thus they are called "materially reborn" (rūpa-patisandhikā),*
  because there is Rūpa at rebirth but no Citta.

In that existence:

- *Their life is just a stream of Rūpa-groups with life-faculty,*

- *No consciousness occurs at all during that lifetime.*

Only when they pass away from that realm do they take rebirth elsewhere,
and consciousness appears again.

This shows how far the Abhidhamma goes in analyzing possibilities of experience:
there can even be a lifetime of Rūpa-only, with no mental activity.

10.5 Review: Rūpa, Change, and Letting Go

Let's gather the main points of this chapter:

1. *Rūpa appears differently in different worlds.*

    - *In the sensuous plane, Rūpa is rich and complex, with all five senses, sex, food, etc.*

    - *In the fine-material plane, Rūpa is simpler and more subtle: no nose-, tongue-, or body-sense, no sex, no nutriment-born groups.*

    - *In the non-percipient realm, there is only Rūpa with life-faculty, but no Citta.*

2. *In a human life, and in all sensuous lives:*

   - *Four kinds of Rūpa (kamma-, citta-, utu-, āhāra-born) flow on unbroken from rebirth-linking until death, like a lamp-flame or river.*

3. *At death:*

   - *Kamma-born Rūpa stops arising shortly before the death-mind.*
   - *It continues only up to the death-moment and then ceases.*
   - *Then citta-born and nutriment-born Rūpas cease.*
   - *Only temperature-born Rūpa lingers as the corpse.*
   - *In a new life, Rūpa begins again from rebirth-linking in the same pattern.*

4. *All Rūpa is conditioned – by kamma, citta, temperature, and nutriment. It never stands still, never belongs to a permanent "self."*

When we meditate or reflect on this, even in a simple way, our relationship with the body can slowly change:

- *Less "This is me,"*
- *More "This is a process of conditions, arising and passing away."*

This understanding prepares us for the next and final step of this book:

Seeing how Rūpa, as conditioned and changing, points beyond itself to Nibbāna, the unconditioned.

That will be the topic of Chapter 11, our bridge from matter to the unconditioned.

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Questions for Quiet Reflection

You don't need to "solve" these. Just gently think about them.

1. *When you look at your body, can you imagine it as a stream of Rūpa-groups arising and passing like the frames of a video?*

2. *How does it feel to know that, at death, only temperature-born Rūpa remains as a corpse?*

3. *Why do you think the Buddha taught about realms where Rūpa is simpler or even where there is only Rūpa without Citta?*

4. *Does seeing the body as a conditioned process make it easier, even a little, to accept change, sickness, and aging?*

If you'd like, we can now go to Chapter 11 – "Looking Beyond Rūpa: Matter and the Door to Nibbāna" next.

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Chapter 11 – Looking Beyond Rūpa: Matter and the Door to Nibbāna

Imagine standing on the seashore.

You watch wave after wave rise up, roll forward, and fall back.
No wave stays. None is "the" sea. Each one is just water taking a shape for a short time.

In this book, we've been looking at Rūpa (matter) in the same way:

- *Tiny groups of Rūpa arise, change, and vanish.*
- *The body and world are just endless waves of Rūpa-groups, built from causes.*
- *Nothing solid, nothing lasting, nothing that can truly be "I" or "mine."*

Now we will look up from the waves and talk briefly about something very different:

Nibbāna – the unconditioned reality.

This chapter is like a bridge:

- *From Rūpa, which is conditioned,*
- *To Nibbāna, which is unconditioned.*

A later book will go into Nibbāna in detail. Here, we just want a simple, clear taste.

11.1 Recap of Rūpa: Fully Conditioned, Never "Self"

Let's summarize what we saw in this book:

1. *Rūpa is one of four ultimate realities*

- *Citta – consciousness*
- *Cetasikā – mental factors*
- *Rūpa – material phenomena*
- *Nibbāna – the unconditioned element*

2. *Rūpa is always conditioned.*
   - *It depends on causes: kamma, citta, temperature, nutriment.*
   - *Without these causes, no Rūpa arises at all.*
3. *Rūpa is impermanent.*
   - *Each material group has production, continuity, decay, impermanence as its stages.*
   - *Rūpa-groups arise and pass away extremely fast, like tiny flashes.*
4. *Rūpa is not sentient.*
   - *It does not know anything.*
   - *It is known by mind, but does not itself experience.*
5. *"Person" is just Nāma + Rūpa together.*
   - *The body (Rūpa) + mind (Citta and Cetasikā) make up what we call "I" or "you".*
   - *When examined closely, there is no solid self, only processes.*

So we can say:

Rūpa is conditioned (saṅkhata), changing, and not-self.

Because of that, clinging to body and material things leads to stress and disappointment.
They cannot be fully controlled. They cannot be kept forever.

The Abhidhamma helps us see this very clearly, step by step,
so that the heart becomes ready to appreciate something beyond the conditioned.

That "beyond" is Nibbāna.

11.2 Nibbāna as the Unconditioned Element (Asaṅkhata-dhātu)

In the Abhidhamma, Nibbāna is introduced very briefly in the section that lists the ultimate realities:

- *All conditioned realities (Citta, Cetasikā, and Rūpa) are grouped together as saṅkhata-dhammas – things made by causes.*
- *Then Nibbāna is mentioned as asaṅkhata-dhātu – the unconditioned element.*

So we have a very sharp contrast:

- *Rūpa = conditioned, arises from causes, arises and passes away.*
- *Nibbāna = unconditioned, does not arise from any cause, does not arise and pass away.*

Abhidhamma does not describe Nibbāna as:

- *A place,*
- *A person,*

- *A heavenly world,*
- *Or a "soul resting somewhere."*

Instead, Nibbāna is described with words like:

- *The unconditioned element*
- *The cessation of formations*
- *The end of craving*
- *Peace*
- *The deathless*

These are not meant as poetic decorations, but as carefully chosen names for one reality:

> *The complete stopping of greed, hatred, and delusion,*
> *and the end of birth, aging, and death.*

From the Abhidhamma view:

- *Nibbāna is an ultimate reality (paramattha-dhamma), like Citta, Cetasikā, and Rūpa.*
- *But it is totally different in type:*
  - *It is one unconditioned reality.*
  - *It is not made by any cause.*
  - *It is not destroyed, because it never "arose" in the first place.*

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All conditioned realities have the three marks:

- *Impermanent (anicca)*
- *Unsatisfactory (dukkha)*
- *Not-self (anattā)*

Nibbāna is sometimes described as:

- *The stilling of these three marks,*
- *The end of the whirl of conditioned existence.*

Abhidhamma gives us a place for Nibbāna in its map:
it is the fourth ultimate reality, the goal towards which insight-knowledge moves.

11.3 How Understanding Rūpa Helps Reduce Clinging

You might wonder:

> *"Okay, Rūpa is conditioned, Nibbāna is unconditioned.*
> *But how does studying tiny material groups help me get closer to Nibbāna?"*

Good question.

The Buddha's path is practical. Abhidhamma is meant to support practice, not replace it.

Here are some ways understanding Rūpa can help:

1. Less "this body is really me"

- *When we think "This is my body. I am this shape, this face,"*
  clinging to Rūpa becomes very strong.

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- *When we see the body as 28 kinds of Rūpa, arising from four causes,*
  in 21 kinds of groups, moment by moment,
  the feeling of a solid owner begins to crack a little.

You can gently reflect:

> *"This body is just Rūpa-groups made by kamma, mind, temperature, and food.*
> *How can that be a permanent 'I'?"*

This doesn't mean we hate the body.
It means we see it more truthfully, so we can care for it without blind attachment.

2. Clearer sense of impermanence

- *Reading "all things are impermanent" is one thing.*

- *Seeing how every bit of matter must go through birth, continuity, decay, and breaking up is more precise.*

- *Seeing that body and world are like a flowing river of Rūpa-groups makes impermanence more real.*

This supports meditation on anicca:

> *Not "everything is chaotic,"*
> *but "everything is lawfully changing, moment by moment."*

3. Understanding the limits of Rūpa

We love to fix problems by changing Rūpa:

- *New clothes, new phone, new body shape, new house…*

- *But no matter what we do, all Rūpa stays conditioned and mortal.*

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Understanding this:

- *Does not mean we never enjoy nice things.*

- *It means we don't expect Rūpa to give us a perfect, unshakable happiness.*

That prepares the heart to appreciate:

> *"If all Rūpa is limited, maybe the highest peace is not found in Rūpa at all,*
> *but in something beyond the conditioned."*

This "something beyond" is Nibbāna.

11.4 From Mind-and-Matter to the Unconditioned: Bridge to the Next Book

Let's imagine the full picture again.

Abhidhamma shows us:

1. *Nāma (mind)*
    - *Citta and Cetasikā – knowing and its mental factors, arising and passing very fast.*
2. *Rūpa (matter)*
    - *28 types, in groups, arising and passing, never knowing anything.*
3. *The Cycle (Saṃsāra)*
    - *Dependent on kamma, citta, temperature, nutriment, and the whole web of conditions.*

4. *Nibbāna*
    - *The unconditioned element, the end of this cycle.*

The practice of Dhamma includes:

- *Watching mind and matter more clearly,*
- *Seeing their impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self,*
- *Gradually weakening craving and clinging,*
- *Until, at the highest wisdom, the mind realizes Nibbāna directly.*

This book (Book 3) focused on just one side: Rūpa.

- *We saw how detailed and non-mystical the Abhidhamma analysis is.*
- *There is no secret soul hidden in matter.*
- *There are only conditioned Rūpa-groups, rising and falling according to causes.*

Book 4 will focus on Nibbāna:

- *What it means to be unconditioned.*
- *How Nibbāna is experienced in the path and fruition moments.*
- *The different ways the texts describe Nibbāna (as peace, as truth, as the end of craving).*

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- *How understanding conditioned dhammas (like Rūpa) makes the heart ready to let go enough to realize the unconditioned.*

You can think of it like this:

- *Book 1 (Citta) and Book 2 (Cetasikā) showed the mind side.*
- *Book 3 (Rūpa) showed the matter side.*
- *Both are saṅkhata – conditioned.*
- *Book 4 (Nibbāna) will show what is asaṅkhata – the unconditioned.*

Together, they form the Abhidhamma's full map of reality:
all that can be truly said to exist ultimately.

Summary of Chapter 11

- *Rūpa is one of the four ultimate realities, but it is fully conditioned:*
  - *Arises from kamma, citta, temperature, and nutriment.*
  - *Always impermanent, unsatisfactory, and not-self.*
  - *Exists in tiny groups (kalāpas), not as a solid block.*
- *Nibbāna is the unconditioned element (asaṅkhata-dhātu):*
  - *Not made by causes,*
  - *Not subject to arising and ceasing,*

- *Known as the cessation of formations, end of craving, peace, the deathless.*

- *Seeing Rūpa clearly:*
  - *Weakens clinging to "my body" and "my world".*
  - *Shows the limitations of all material things.*
  - *Prepares the mind to value something beyond the conditioned.*
- *This chapter is a bridge:*
  - *From detailed study of matter (Rūpa),*
  - *To a deeper exploration of Nibbāna, which will be the focus of the next book.*

Reflection Questions

You can just think about these slowly, or write short notes.

1. *When you remember everything you learned in this book about Rūpa, how does it change the way you feel about your own body?*

2. *What comes to your mind when you hear "Nibbāna is the unconditioned element"?*
   Does it feel scary? Peaceful? Confusing?

3. *Which idea helps you most to let go a little of clinging to matter:*
   - *Rūpa is always changing,*

- *Rūpa is just cause-and-effect,*
- *Rūpa is not-self,*
- *Or "Rūpa can't give final safety or peace"?*

4. *If you could ask one question about Nibbāna to explore in the next book, what would it be?*

Appendix A – Technical Tables on Rūpa

A.1 – 28 Rūpas and the Four Causes (18 / 15 / 13 / 12)

Legend

- ✅ *= can arise from that cause*
- ❌ *= does not arise from that cause*

#	Rūpa	Kamma	Citta	Utu (Temperature)	Āhāra (Nutriment)
Inseparable 8 (Avinibbhoga-rūpa)					
1	*Earth element (paṭhavī-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
2	*Water element (āpo-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
3	*Fire element (tejo-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
4	*Air element (vāyo-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅

5	*Colour / visible form (vaṇṇa-rūpa)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
6	*Odour (gandha-rūpa)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
7	*Taste (rasa-rūpa)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
8	*Nutritive essence (ojā, āhāra-rūpa)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
Faculties (Indriya-rūpa) – 5 senses + sex + life					
9	*Eye-sensitivity (cakkhu-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
10	*Ear-sensitivity (sota-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
11	*Nose-sensitivity (ghāna-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
12	*Tongue-sensitivity (jivhā-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌

13	*Body-sensitivity (kāya-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
14	*Femininity (itthibhāva-rūpa)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
15	*Masculinity (purisabhāva-rūpa)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
16	*Material life faculty (rūpa-jīvitindriya)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
Base Rūpa					
17	*Heart-base (hadaya-vatthu)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
Intimation Rūpas (Viññatti-rūpa)					
18	*Bodily intimation (kāya-viññatti)*	❌	✅	❌	❌
19	*Vocal intimation (vācī-viññatti)*	❌	✅	❌	❌

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Sound and Space					
20	*Sound (sadda-rūpa)*	❌	✅	✅	❌
21	*Space element (ākāsa-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
Mutable / Plastic Rūpas (Vikāra-rūpa)					
22	*Lightness (lahutā)*	❌	✅	✅	✅
23	*Malleability (mudutā)*	❌	✅	✅	✅
24	*Wieldiness (kammaññatā)*	❌	✅	✅	✅
Characteristics of Rūpa (Lakkhaṇa-rūpa)					
25	*Production (uppāda-rūpa)*	❌	❌	❌	❌
26	*Continuity (ṭhiti / santati-rūpa)*	❌	❌	❌	❌

27	*Decay (jaratā-rūpa)*	❌	❌	❌	❌
28	*Impermanence (aniccatā-rūpa)*	❌	❌	❌	❌

Number patterns (for quick reference):

- *From kamma: 18 Rūpas*
    - *8 inseparables + 8 faculties + heart-base + space*
- *From citta: 15 Rūpas*
    - *8 inseparables + 2 intimations + 3 mutables + sound + space*
- *From utu: 13 Rūpas*
    - *8 inseparables + 3 mutables + sound + space*
- *From āhāra: 12 Rūpas*
    - *8 inseparables + 3 mutables + space*
- *From exactly one cause:*
    - *8 faculties + heart-base (kamma-only)*
    - *2 intimations (citta-only)*

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- *From two causes:*
    - *Sound (citta + utu)*
- *From three causes:*
    - *Lightness, malleability, wieldiness (citta + utu + āhāra)*
- *From four causes:*
    - *8 inseparables + space*
- *Causeless (no origin):*
    - *4 characteristics (production, continuity, decay, impermanence)*

A.2 – Timing: Rūpa vs Citta

A.2.1 Duration of One Citta and One Rūpa

Item	*Structure*	*Sub-moments*	*Mind-moments*	*Notes*
Single citta	*arising → presence → dissolution*	*3*	*1*	*Basic mental unit (one "mind-moment")*
Single Rūpa	*arising → long presence → dissolution*	*51*	*17*	*Rūpa "outlives" 17 cittas*

- *1 citta = 3 sub-moments*
- *1 Rūpa = 51 sub-moments = 17 mind-moments (51 ÷ 3)*

So any given Rūpa-group exists across 17 successive cittas.

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A.2.2 Start and Stop of the Four Origins in a Sensuous-Life (Kāma-loka)

This is a fine-grained timing chart for a life in the sensuous plane.

Life Phase (Kāma-loka)	*Kamma-born Rūpa*	*Citta-born Rūpa*	*Utu-born Rūpa*	*Āhāra-born Rūpa*
Rebirth-linking (paṭisandhi)	✅ *begins here*	❌ *(rebirth citta doesn't produce Rūpa)*	❌	❌
2nd citta onward	✅ *continues*	✅ *begins (from first bhavaṅga)*	❌	❌
Presence of first Rūpa	✅	✅	✅ *begins (first temperature-born Rūpa)*	❌
After nutritive essence spreads	✅	✅	✅	✅ *begins (first nutriment-born Rūpa)*
Throughout life (middle)	✅ *flow of Rūpa-groups from kamma*	✅ *flow from citta*	✅ *flow from utu*	✅ *flow from nutriment*

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From presence of 17th citta before death	❌ *new kamma-born; only old ones remain*	✅ *still arise*	✅ *still arise*	✅ *still arise*
Death-moment (cuti-citta)	*all kamma-born cease at that moment*	*last citta-born cease*	✅ *utu-born continue as corpse stream*	*all nutriment-born cease*
After death (corpse)	❌	❌	✅ *only utu-born Rūpa remains for a while*	❌

In the next life (if there is rebirth), the pattern starts again:

- *Kamma-born at rebirth-linking,*
- *Citta-born from the second citta,*
- *Utu-born from the first Rūpa's presence,*
- *Āhāra-born when nutriment spreads.*

A.3 – Heart-Base and Bases by Realm

A.3.1 Canon vs Commentary on Heart-Base (Hadaya-vatthu)

Source	*How it describes the base for mind*
Paṭṭhāna (canonical Abhidhamma)	*Speaks of "that matter in dependence on which the mind-element and mind-consciousness element occur" – but does not explicitly say "heart" or "hadaya-vatthu".*
Commentarial tradition	*Interprets "that matter" as hadaya-vatthu, the material heart-base, and describes it as "a cavity situated within the physical heart" which serves as the base for many cittas.*

So:

- *Canon: functional description ("that matter in dependence on which…").*
- *Commentaries: identify this with a physical heart cavity and call it heart-base.*

This appendix can mention this as a traditional interpretation, without taking sides in modern debates.

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A.3.2 Material Bases (Vatthu) by Realm

A simple realm-by-realm map using the standard Abhidhamma scheme.

Realm Type	*Has Rūpa?*	*Material Bases Present*	*Short Notes*
Kāma-loka (sensuous plane) – humans, animals, ghosts, many devas	✅	*Eye-base, ear-base, nose-base, tongue-base, body-base, heart-base (except where defective, e.g. blind-from-birth)*	*Full 5-sense life, sex, food, coarse matter; all six bases function as supports for citta.*
Rūpa-loka (fine-material Brahmās)	✅ *(very subtle)*	*Eye-base, ear-base, heart-base only*	*No nose-, tongue-, or body-base; no sex faculties; no nutriment-born matter (no coarse eating). Rūpa is much subtler.*
Asaññā-satta (non-percipient beings, special Rūpa-loka realm)	✅ *(only certain Rūpa-groups)*	*Vital nonad only (life + 8 inseparables) – no functioning bases for citta*	*Whole life is Rūpa-only; no consciousness during that existence, so bases like eye-base/heart-base are not functioning as supports.*
Arūpa-loka (immaterial Brahmās)	❌ *(no Rūpa)*	*None*	*Only Citta and Cetasikas; no material bases at all.*

A.4 – Nāma–Rūpa in the 24 Conditions (Paṭṭhāna Style, from the Manual)

The full Paṭṭhāna analyzes Nāma–Rūpa with 24 conditional relations.

A.4.1 Key Conditions Where Nāma–Rūpa Interaction is Explicit

Condition (English / Pāli)	*Direction*	*Example Given in the Manual (Paraphrased)*
Conascence / Sahajāta-paccaya	*Nāma ↔ Rūpa*	*1) Cittas and cetasikas condition conascent Rūpa and each other. 2) The four great essentials condition each other and derived Rūpas in the same group. 3) At rebirth, heart-base and resultant mental aggregates condition one another as conascence conditions.*
Support / Nissaya-paccaya	*Rūpa → Nāma*	*Eye-base, ear-base, etc. are physical supports for their respective consciousnesses. Heart-base is support for many mental processes (mind-door cittas).*
Prenascence / Purejāta-paccaya	*Rūpa → Nāma*	*Previously arisen sense-bases and body are prenascence conditions for later arising cittas (e.g. the already-present eye-base is a condition for later seeing consciousness).*
Postnascence / Pacchājāta-paccaya	*Nāma → Rūpa*	*“Only in one way is mind a condition for matter: subsequent consciousness and mental factors are a condition for this preceding*

		body by way of postnascence." (Later mind "looks after" earlier-arisen body.)
Nutriment / Āhāra-paccaya	*Rūpa → Nāma-Rūpa & Nāma → Rūpa*	*a) Edible food (Rūpa) is nutriment for this body (Rūpa). b) In the Abhidhamma method, mental nutriments condition conascent nāma–rūpa (e.g. contact, volition, etc., sustaining both mind and related matter).*
Faculty / Indriya-paccaya	*Rūpa → Nāma-Rūpa*	*Material faculties – the five sense-faculties and life-faculty – condition their associated mind and matter; e.g. eye-faculty as a faculty-condition for seeing consciousness and its accompanying Rūpas.*
Jhāna / Jhāna-paccaya	*Nāma → Rūpa*	*Jhāna factors (applied thought, sustained thought, rapture, happiness, one-pointedness) condition conascent material phenomena in jhānic cittas (e.g. very refined Rūpa in fine-material realms).*
Path / Magga-paccaya	*Nāma → Rūpa*	*Path factors (right view, right effort, etc.) condition conascent nāma and supporting Rūpas in path and fruition moments (e.g. bodily posture of the meditator at that instant).*
Association / Sampayutta-paccaya	*Nāma ↔ Rūpa (indirect)*	*Associated mental states condition each other and their conascent material phenomena (e.g. a wholesome consciousness conditions the Rūpa born from that consciousness).*

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Dissociation / Vippayutta-paccaya	*Nāma ↔ Rūpa*	*At rebirth, heart-base and mental aggregates are dissociated conditions for one another—like oil and water in the same bowl; during life, preceding body conditions later mind, and later mind conditions earlier body, all by dissociation.*
Presence / Atthi-paccaya	*Rūpa → Nāma-Rūpa*	*The presence of supporting Rūpa (eye-base, heart-base, etc.) is a condition for arising cittas; also, Rūpa-groups already present condition other Rūpas in the same body or object.*
Nutriment-present / Āhāra-atthi & Faculty-present / Indriya-atthi	*Rūpa → Nāma-Rūpa*	*Special cases of presence: edible food present in the body, and existing faculties (like life-faculty) are "presence" conditions for nāma–rūpa they sustain.*

A.4.2 Honest Limitation for This Appendix

For some of the 24 conditions, mainly give mental examples, such as:

- *Root condition (hetu) – mental roots conditioning mental states.*
- *Kamma / Vipāka conditions – kamma as mental volition, and results as cittas.*
- *Object predominance, proximity, contiguity, repetition, etc.*

We know from the full Paṭṭhāna that Rūpa can be involved (e.g. as object, as decisive support), but:

> *"This appendix lists the Nama–Rūpa relations that the Abhidhamma manuals actually explain in detail (conascence, support, prenascence, postnascence, nutriment, faculty, dissociation, presence, etc.). For a complete treatment of how every Rūpa and every Nāma condition each other under all 24 relations, one must study the full Paṭṭhāna, the last book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka."*

A.1 – 28 Rūpas and the Four Causes (18 / 15 / 13 / 12)

Legend

- ✅ = *can arise from that cause*
- ❌ = *does not arise from that cause*

A.1.1 Full Table: 28 Rūpas × Four Origins

#	Rūpa	Kamma	Citta	Utu (Temperature)	Āhāra (Nutriment)
	Inseparable 8 (Avinibbhoga-rūpa)				
1	*Earth element (paṭhavī-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
2	*Water element (āpo-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
3	*Fire element (tejo-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
4	*Air element (vāyo-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅

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5	*Colour / visible form (vaṇṇa-rūpa)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
6	*Odour (gandha-rūpa)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
7	*Taste (rasa-rūpa)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
8	*Nutritive essence (ojā, āhāra-rūpa)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
Faculties (Indriya-rūpa) – 5 senses + sex + life					
9	*Eye-sensitivity (cakkhu-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
10	*Ear-sensitivity (sota-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
11	*Nose-sensitivity (ghāna-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
12	*Tongue-sensitivity (jivhā-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌

13	*Body-sensitivity (kāya-pasāda)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
14	*Femininity (itthibhāva-rūpa)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
15	*Masculinity (purisabhāva-rūpa)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
16	*Material life faculty (rūpa-jīvitindriya)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
Base Rūpa					
17	*Heart-base (hadaya-vatthu)*	✅	❌	❌	❌
Intimation Rūpas (Viññatti-rūpa)					
18	*Bodily intimation (kāya-viññatti)*	❌	✅	❌	❌
19	*Vocal intimation (vācī-viññatti)*	❌	✅	❌	❌

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Sound and Space					
20	*Sound (sadda-rūpa)*	❌	✅	✅	❌
21	*Space element (ākāsa-dhātu)*	✅	✅	✅	✅
Mutable / Plastic Rūpas (Vikāra-rūpa)					
22	*Lightness (lahutā)*	❌	✅	✅	✅
23	*Malleability (mudutā)*	❌	✅	✅	✅
24	*Wieldiness (kammaññatā)*	❌	✅	✅	✅
Characteristics of Rūpa (Lakkhaṇa-rūpa)					
25	*Production (uppāda-rūpa)*	❌	❌	❌	❌
26	*Continuity (ṭhiti / santati-rūpa)*	❌	❌	❌	❌

27	*Decay (jaratā-rūpa)*	❌	❌	❌	❌
28	*Impermanence (aniccatā-rūpa)*	❌	❌	❌	❌

A.1.2 Number Patterns

- *From kamma (kamma-samuṭṭhāna): 18 Rūpas*
    - *8 inseparables*
    - *8 faculties (5 senses + sex + life)*
    - *Heart-base*
    - *Space element*
- *From consciousness (citta-samuṭṭhāna): 15 Rūpas*
    - *8 inseparables*
    - *2 intimations (bodily, vocal)*
    - *3 mutables (lightness, malleability, wieldiness)*
    - *Sound*
    - *Space*

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- *From temperature (utu-samuṭṭhāna): 13 Rūpas*
    - *8 inseparables*
    - *3 mutables*
    - *Sound*
    - *Space*
- *From nutriment (āhāra-samuṭṭhāna): 12 Rūpas*
    - *8 inseparables*
    - *3 mutables*
    - *Space*
- *From exactly one cause*
    - *8 faculties + heart-base (kamma only)*
    - *2 intimations (citta only)*
- *From two causes*
    - *Sound (citta + temperature)*
- *From three causes*
    - *Lightness, malleability, wieldiness (citta + temperature + nutriment)*
- *From four causes*

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- *8 inseparables + space*

- *Causeless (no origin)*

    - *4 characteristics of matter: production, continuity, decay, impermanence*

A.2 – Timing: Citta and Rūpa

A.2.1 Lifespan of One Citta and One Rūpa

Item	*Structure*	*Sub-moments*	*Mind-moments*	*Notes*
Single citta	*Arising → presence → dissolution*	*3 sub-moments*	*1 mind-moment*	*Basic unit of mind*
Single Rūpa	*Arising → long presence → dissolution*	*51 sub-moments*	*17 mind-moments*	*Rūpa persists across 17 cittas*

- *1 citta = 3 sub-moments (arising, presence, dissolution).*
- *1 Rūpa = 51 sub-moments = 17 mind-moments (51 ÷ 3).*

So a material group (Rūpa-kalāpa) lasts as long as 17 cittas.

A.2.2 Start and Stop of Each Origin (Sensuous Plane Life)

Context: kāma-loka, e.g. human life.

Life Phase	*Kamma-born Rūpa*	*Citta-born Rūpa*	*Utu-born Rūpa*	*Āhāra-born Rūpa*
Rebirth-linking (paṭisandhi)	✅ *First kamma-born groups arise (e.g. eye-decad, vital nonad)*	❌ *Rebirth citta does not produce Rūpa*	❌	❌
Second citta onward	✅ *Continues*	✅ *Begins from 2nd citta (first bhavaṅga)*	❌	❌
Presence of first Rūpa	✅	✅	✅ *Begins when first Rūpa reaches presence stage*	❌
After nutritive essence spreads	✅	✅	✅	✅ *Begins when nutriment (ojā) is present and active*

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Middle of life	✅ *Continuous stream of kamma-born groups*	✅ *Continuous stream of citta-born groups (postures, intimation, etc.)*	✅ *Continuous stream of temperature-born groups*	✅ *Continuous stream of nutriment-born groups*
From presence of the 17th citta before death	❌ *No new kamma-born Rūpa; already arisen ones still persist*	✅ *Still arising*	✅ *Still arising*	✅ *Still arising*
At death-moment (cuti-citta)	*All kamma-born Rūpa cease here*	*Last citta-born Rūpa cease*	✅ *Temperature-born Rūpa continues as corpse-stream*	*All nutriment-born Rūpa cease*
After death (corpse)	❌	❌	✅ *Only temperature-born Rūpa remains for some time*	❌

In a new life, the same pattern starts again from its own rebirth-linking.

A.3 – Heart-Base (Hadaya-vatthu) and Bases by Realm

A.3.1 Canon and Commentary on Heart-Base

Source Type	*Description of the Base for Mind*
Canonical Abhidhamma (Paṭṭhāna)	*Refers to "that matter in dependence on which the mind-element and mind-consciousness element occur," without explicitly naming "heart" or "hadaya-vatthu".*
Commentarial Tradition	*Identifies "that matter" as hadaya-vatthu, the material heart-base, described as a cavity within the physical heart that serves as the base for mind-element and mind-consciousness element in beings with Rūpa.*

So:

- *Functionally: "that matter supporting mind-element and mind-consciousness."*
- *Commentarially: "that matter" = physical heart-base inside the heart.*

You can present this as the traditional Theravāda explanation, without entering modern debates about brain vs heart.

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A.3.2 Material Bases (Vatthūni) by Realm

Realm Type	*Rūpa present?*	*Material Bases Present*	*Notes*
Kāma-loka (sensuous plane – humans, animals, ghosts, many devas)	✅	*Eye-base, ear-base, nose-base, tongue-base, body-base, heart-base (except where defective)*	*Full 5-sense life, sex, food, coarse Rūpa. All six bases operate as supports for different cittas.*
Rūpa-loka (fine-material Brahmās)	✅ *(very subtle)*	*Eye-base, ear-base, heart-base*	*No nose-, tongue-, or body-bases; no sex faculties; no nutriment-born matter. Rūpa is much more refined.*
Asaññā-satta (non-percipient beings – special Rūpa-loka realm)	✅ *(limited)*	*Vital nonad only (8 inseparables + life faculty); no functioning bases for citta*	*Existence is Rūpa-only. No consciousness arises in that lifetime.*
Arūpa-loka (immaterial Brahmās)	❌	*None*	*Only Nāma (citta and cetasikas). No Rūpa, no bases.*

A.4 – Nāma–Rūpa in the 24 Conditional Relations

The Paṭṭhāna analyzes reality with 24 conditions (paccaya).

A.4.1 Key Conditions with Clear Nāma–Rūpa Examples

Condition (English / Pāli)	*Direction*	*Typical Nāma–Rūpa Example*
Conascence / Sahajāta-paccaya	*Nāma ↔ Rūpa*	*Cittas and cetasikas condition conascent Rūpa (and each other). The four great essentials condition each other and their co-arisen derived Rūpas. At rebirth, heart-base and resultant mental aggregates condition each other by conascence.*
Support / Nissaya-paccaya	*Rūpa → Nāma*	*Eye-base, ear-base, etc. are physical supports for their respective consciousnesses. Heart-base is the support for many cittas (mind-door processes).*
Prenascence / Purejāta-paccaya	*Rūpa → Nāma*	*Already-arisen sense-bases and body condition later cittas (e.g. eye-base present before seeing consciousness).*
Postnascence / Pacchājāta-paccaya	*Nāma → Rūpa*	*Later mind and mental factors look after earlier-arisen body as postnascence condition (mind conditioning Rūpa that arose before).*
Nutriment / Āhāra-paccaya	*Rūpa → Rūpa,*	*Edible food (material nutriment) conditions the body's material phenomena. Mental*

	Nāma ↔ Rūpa	*nutriments (contact, volition, etc.) condition conascent nāma–rūpa.*
Faculty / Indriya-paccaya	*Rūpa → Nāma–Rūpa*	*Material faculties (5 senses, sex, life) condition their associated mental and material states; e.g. eye-faculty as a faculty-condition for seeing consciousness and related Rūpas.*
Jhāna / Jhāna-paccaya	*Nāma → Rūpa*	*Jhāna factors condition conascent material phenomena in refined jhānic consciousness (especially in fine-material realms).*
Path / Magga-paccaya	*Nāma → Rūpa*	*Path factors (right view, right effort, etc.) condition conascent Nāma and their supporting Rūpa during path and fruition moments.*
Association / Sampayutta-paccaya	*Nāma ↔ Rūpa (indirect)*	*Associated mental states condition each other and the Rūpa born from that consciousness. (Rūpa is not "associated" but arises with and depends on that associated Nāma.)*
Dissociation / Vippayutta-paccaya	*Nāma ↔ Rūpa*	*At rebirth, heart-base and mental aggregates are dissociated conditions for one another (like oil and water). During life, earlier body conditions later mind, and later mind conditions earlier body, by dissociation.*

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Presence / Atthi-paccaya	*Rūpa → Nāma–Rūpa*	*The presence of supporting Rūpa (eye-base, heart-base, etc.) is a condition for arising cittas; present Rūpa-groups also condition other Rūpas as long as they persist.*
Nutriment-present / Āhāra-atthi & Faculty-present / Indriya-atthi	*Rūpa → Nāma–Rūpa*	*Special subcases of presence: present edible nutriment and existing faculties (like life-faculty) are conditions for the mind-and-matter they sustain.*

Rūpa Cheat Sheet – Quick Revision of Book 3

1. The Place of Rūpa in Abhidhamma

Four ultimate realities:

1. *Citta – consciousness, the knowing*
2. *Cetasikā – mental factors, the "flavours" of knowing*
3. *Rūpa – material phenomena, the physical side*
4. *Nibbāna – the unconditioned element*

So a "person" is just Nāma + Rūpa, mind and matter together.

2. The 28 Types of Rūpa (Matter)

2.1 Four Great Essentials (Mahā-bhūta)

1. *Earth element (paṭhavī-dhātu) – hardness/softness, solidity, extension*
2. *Water element (āpo-dhātu) – cohesion, binding, fluidity*
3. *Fire element (tejo-dhātu) – temperature, heat/cold*
4. *Air element (vāyo-dhātu) – motion, distension, pressure*

These four are inseparable and present in all matter, from tiniest particle to mountain.

The World Around Us: Rūpa (Matter)

2.2 24 Derived Rūpas (Upādāya-rūpa)

Grouped as:

- *Inseparable qualities (always with the four elements):*
    - *Colour, odour, taste, nutritive essence*
- *Sensitive phenomena (pasāda-rūpa):*
    - *Eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, body-sensitivity*
- *Sense objects:*
    - *Visible form, sound, smell, taste, tangibility*
- *Life-support Rūpas:*
    - *Femininity, masculinity*
    - *Heart-base*
    - *Material life faculty*
    - *Nutriment (nutritive essence)*
- *Non-concrete / subtle Rūpas:*
    - *Space element (delimits groups)*
    - *Bodily intimation, vocal intimation*
    - *Lightness, malleability, wieldiness*
    - *Production, continuity, decay, impermanence*

3. Inseparables and Rūpa-Groups (Rūpa-kalāpa)

Eight inseparable Rūpas:

- *4 great essentials*
- *Colour, odour, taste, nutriment*

These form the pure octad (suddhaṭṭhaka) – the basic "packet" of matter.

Rūpas never arise alone, but in groups (kalāpas):

- *Pure octad – 8 basic Rūpas*
- *Vital nonad – octad + life faculty*
- *Decads – octad + life + one special Rūpa (eye, ear, sex, heart-base, etc.)*
- *Totally 21 group types, produced by:*
  - *9 kamma-born groups*
  - *6 citta-born groups*
  - *4 temperature-born groups*
  - *2 nutriment-born groups*

Everything we call "body" is a stream of these tiny groups arising and vanishing.

4. Four Origins of Rūpa

Rūpa arises through four causes:

1. *Kamma-born:*
    - *Past volitional actions produce sense-bases, sex, heart-base, life faculty, and their supporting octads.*
    - *Present from rebirth-linking, renewing through life.*
2. *Citta-born:*
    - *Mind produces Rūpa for postures, gestures, speech, and some sounds.*
    - *Starts from the second citta of life.*
3. *Temperature-born (utu-born):*
    - *Internal and external heat/cold produce Rūpa, including some sound and plastic qualities (lightness, etc.).*
4. *Nutriment-born (āhāra-born):*
    - *Nutritive essence from food produces new pure octads and lightness-triad groups in the body.*

Count pattern:

- *18 Rūpas from kamma*
- *15 from citta*
- *13 from temperature*

- *12 from nutriment*

8 inseparables + space arise from all four causes.

5. Timing: Citta vs Rūpa

- *One citta lasts 1 mind-moment, composed of 3 sub-moments.*

- *One Rūpa lasts 17 mind-moments, composed of 51 sub-moments (1 arising, 49 presence, 1 dissolution).*

In sensuous life (kāma-loka):

- *Kamma-born Rūpa starts at rebirth-linking.*

- *Citta-born from the second citta onward.*

- *Utu-born when the first Rūpa reaches presence.*

- *Āhāra-born when nutriment is active in the body.*

- *All four streams continue to the end of life like a river.*

- *At death:*

    - *New kamma-born Rūpa stops slightly before death, and all existing kamma-born cease at the death-moment.*

    - *Citta-born and nutriment-born cease.*

    - *Temperature-born Rūpa remains for a time as the corpse.*

6. Classifications of Rūpa

Important pairs and groupings:

- *Internal / external:*
    - *Technically internal = the five pasāda-rūpa (sense-bases).*
    - *All other Rūpa = external.*
- *Bases and doors:*
    - *Bases (vatthu): 5 sense-bases + heart-base (support for cittas).*
    - *Doors (dvāra): 5 sense-doors + mind-door (heart-base).*
- *Faculties:*
    - *Eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, sex, life (material faculties).*
- *Gross / subtle, impinging / non-impinging, near / distant:*
    - *Technical terms: Rūpas that directly help produce sense-consciousness are gross/impinging/near; others are subtle/non-impinging/distant.*
- *Clung-to / not-clung-to (upādinna / anupādinna):*
    - *Clung-to = especially kamma-born body as taken as "I" or "mine".*
    - *Not-clung-to = matter not so appropriated.*
- *Inseparable Rūpas (avinibbhoga):*
    - *Four great essentials + colour, odour, taste, nutritive essence.*

7. Rūpa in Different Realms

- *Kāma-loka (sensuous plane):*
    - *Full 5-sense life, sex, food.*
    - *All six bases (eye–ear–nose–tongue–body–heart) in normal beings.*
- *Rūpa-loka (fine-material plane):*
    - *Only eye-, ear-, and heart-base (no nose-, tongue-, or body-base; no sex; no nutriment-born matter).*
- *Asaññā-satta (non-percipient beings):*
    - *Only vital nonad at rebirth, Rūpa-only life, no Citta during that existence.*
- *Arūpa-loka (immaterial plane):*
    - *No Rūpa, no bases; only Citta and Cetasikā.*

8. Rūpa and the Path to Nibbāna

- *All Rūpa is:*
    - *Conditioned (saṅkhata)*
    - *Impermanent (anicca)*
    - *Unsatisfactory (dukkha)*
    - *Not-self (anattā)*

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- *Seeing the body as:*
    - *Just Rūpa-groups from kamma, citta, utu, āhāra,*
    - *Arising and vanishing like waves,*

weakens the idea:

"This body is a permanent, controllable 'me'."

This prepares the mind to appreciate Nibbāna,
the unconditioned element (asaṅkhata-dhātu),
which will be the focus of Book 4.

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa.

Yāni pi imāni dhammadesanā-pustakāni mayā racitāni,

sabbalokassa hitāya sukhāya ca hotu.

Sukha-sādhāraṇena upāyena,

sallakkhaṇika-atthañca gambhīra-atthañca

sukarāvabodhehi desanā pavattatu.

Mayā Bhikkhunā Dhammasaminā Siridantamahapālakena

sabbadese sabbakāle ca

buddhadhammo saphalo anuggahako ca desito hotu;

paṭiladdha-saddhā pasādo ca bahujanassa uppajjatu.

Imaṁ kusala-kammaṁ ādāya

satthari ca dhamme ca saṅghe ca patiṭṭhāya,

kilesānaṁ parikkhayāya,

diṭṭhadhamme nibbāna-sacchikaraṇāya

pattiyā hotu. Idam me puññaṁ nibbānassa paccayo hotu.

Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Enlightened One.

May these Dhamma-teaching books that I have composed be for the welfare and happiness of the whole world. By accessible and skillful means, conveying both the direct and the profound meaning, may the teachings be easy and effective to understand.

May I, Bhikkhu Dhammasami Siridantamahapālaka, teach the Buddha's Dhamma across all lands and times in a fruitful and supportive way; may faith and serene confidence arise in many people.

Relying on the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, may this wholesome effort lead to the exhaustion of defilements and to the realization of Nibbana in this very life. Through this merit, may Nibbana be the condition.

About the Author

By Bhikkhu Indasoma Siridantamahapalaka

Bhikkhu Indasoma Siridantamahapalaka (pen name of **Ven. Sao Dhammasami, M.A. in Pāli, Ph.D. Candidate, I.B.S.C.**) is a Buddhist monk, researcher, teacher and Master Trainer dedicated to preserving and transmitting the Buddha's profound teaching of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* (Dependent Origination). His academic formation combines rigorous Pāli studies at **Magadh University, Bodhgaya**, with higher research in Theravāda philosophy, Abhidhamma, and meditation methodologies.

Ven. Sao Dhammasami has undertaken extensive study of both canonical sources and traditional Burmese lineages, including the teachings of Mogok Sayadaw, Monlae Sayardaw ,Mahāsi Sayadaw, Pa-Auk Sayadaw, and Ledi Sayadaw. His work integrates doctrinal precision with practical application, seeking to make complex principles—such as the twelve links, three rounds (*vaṭṭa*), and twenty modes—accessible for modern students, practitioners, and educators.

He is also the founder of **The Hswagata Buddha Tooth Relics Preservation Museum and he is working for The Office of Siridantamahapalaka**, a platform devoted to Dhamma research, publications, and educational tools. Beyond his academic and teaching commitments, he has actively engaged in cultural preservation and interfaith dialogue, contributing to the safeguarding of Buddhist heritage, including sacred relics and historical sites.

Breaking the Wheel: A Practical Handbook on Dependent Origination represents his most comprehensive effort to date: a bridge between ancient Pāli wisdom, Abhidhamma analysis, and contemporary pedagogy. It is written to serve not only scholars of Buddhism but also practitioners seeking a practical roadmap to understand and transcend the cycle of *saṃsāra*.

The Author Published Books

(All Books can download at https://www.amazon.com and https://www.academia.edu)

Date	Full Title	ASIN
2024-02-28	A Beginner's Guide to the Law of Dependent Origination (Paṭicca-Samuppāda): Introduction to the Mogok Sayadaw's DO Teaching Visual Aid DO Cycle Diagram Vol-V	B0FSKS4F18
2024-02-28	A Beginner's Guide to the Law of Dependent Origination (Paṭicca-Samuppāda): Introduction to the Mogok Sayadaw's DO Teaching Visual Aid DO Cycle Diagram Vol-VI	B0FSLT5WR8
2024-08-22	Paṭiccasamuppāda (Law of Dependent Origination)	B0DDXYTFD7
2024-09-04	A Beginner's Guide… DO Cycle Diagram Vol-I	B0FSWH119Q
2024-09-04	A Beginner's Guide… DO Cycle Diagram Vol-II	B0FSY39NP2
2024-09-04	A Beginner's Guide… DO Cycle Diagram Vol-III	B0FSYWCJ16
2024-09-04	A Beginner's Guide… DO Cycle Diagram Vol-IV	B0FSSGX6HB
2024-09-04	A Beginner's Guide… DO Cycle Diagram Vol-VII	B0FSR19XVB
2024-09-04	A Beginner's Guide… DO Cycle Diagram Vol-VIII	B0FSSGX6HB
2024-11-05	Teacher Manual Hand Book Introduction	B0DM2Q1J65
2024-11-16	The 30 Nissaggiya Rules: MONASTIC DHAMMA	B0DNBHLFGG
2024-11-20	The 4 Pārājikas the 227 Rules of Pātimokkha	B0DNMVJSF4
2024-11-20	The 4 Pāṭidesanīyas: MONASTIC DHAMMA	B0DNMXHQ7X
2024-11-20	The 13 Saṃghādisesas: Monastic Dhamma	B0DNMXQPKG
2024-11-20	The 75 Sekhiya Rules of the Pātimokkha	B0DNMX5BK2
2024-11-20	The 75 Sekhiyas 1st part, Parimaṇḍa	B0DNMVRTLY
2024-11-20	The 75 Sekhiyas 2nd Part Ujuggāhika	B0DJCSSCJ

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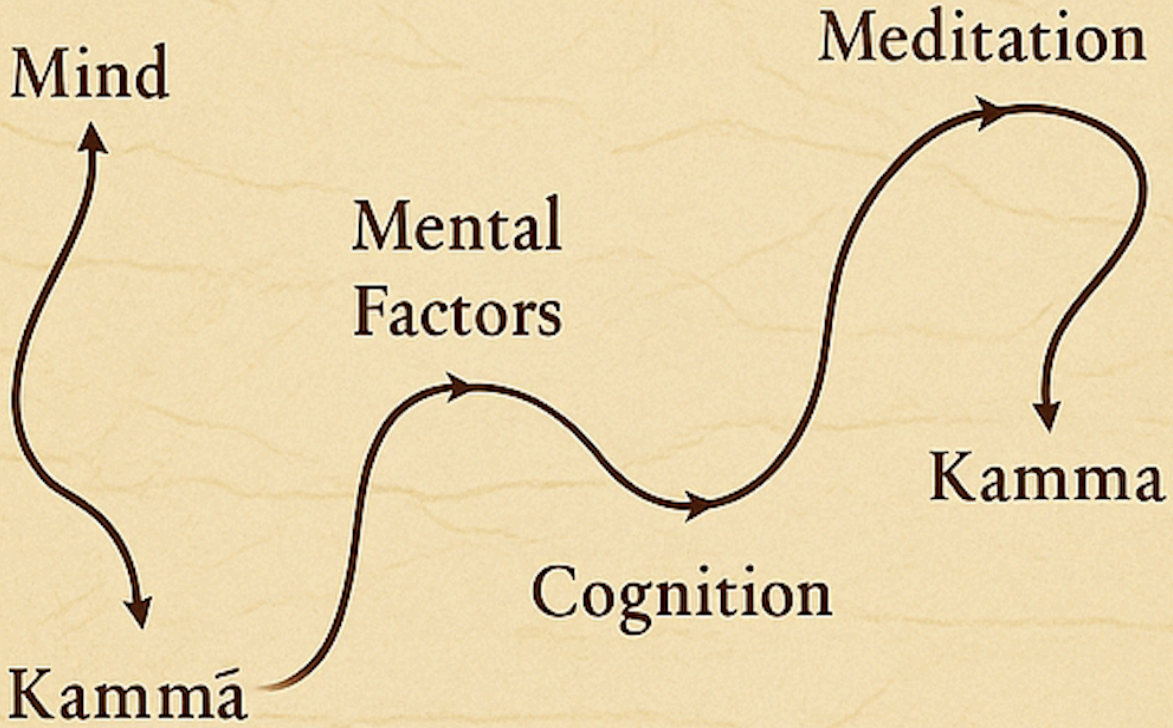
2024-11-20	The 92 Pācittiyas sahadhammika	B0DNMVW6XS1
2024-11-20	The 92 Pācittiyas 5th part Acelaka	B0DNMVM1CZ
2024-11-20	The 92 Pācittiyas Surāpāna: MONASTIKA	B0DNMY7HWD
2024-11-20	Bhūtāgāma 2nd part of the 92 Pācittiyas	B0DNMVX8HN
2024-11-20	Musāvāda the 1st part of The 92 Pācittiyas	B0DNMWQCP3
2024-11-20	The 92 Pācittiyas 3rd part Ovāda: MONASTIKA	B0DNMVHWJ1
2024-11-20	The 92 Pācittiyas 4th part Āvasatha: MONASTIKA	B0DNMTVGL3
2024-11-20	The 92 Pācittiyas Sappāṇaka: MONASTIKA	B0DNMW8DZ0
2024-11-20	The 2 Aniyata Rules of the Pātimokkha	B0DNNMXBLSS
2024-11-20	The 75 Sekhiya Rules of the Pātimokkha	B0DNN314HB
2024-11-21	The 75 Sekhiyas 5th Part Kabaḷa	B0DNRBBPB9
2024-11-21	The 75 Sekhiya Rules of the Pātimokkha	B0DNRBWM1N
2024-11-21	The 75 Sekhiya Rules of the Pātimokkha	B0DNDRD5KM6
2024-11-22	Other Faults (Out of Pātimokkha) Third Part	B0DNTM2T96
2024-11-22	The 7 Adhikaraṇasamatha Methods: Commentary	B0DNTMYV6M
2024-11-24	The 13 Saṃghādisesas: (Assessment B)	B0DNNY3CJDV
2024-11-24	The 4 Pārājikas and the 227 Rules of the Pātimokkha	B0DNY2DPHL
2024-11-25	The 2 Aniyata Rules of the Pātimokkha	B0DNZKGPHZ
2024-11-25	The 30 Nissaggiya Rules (Assessment)	B0DNYHPJ66
2024-11-25	The 92 Pācittiyas (2nd Part - Bhūta)	B0DNYX6SDT
2024-11-25	The 92 Pācittiyas (1st Part - Musās)	B0DNZ69PT

2024-11-26	The 92 Pācittiyas (3rd Part - Ovāda)	B0D2PHJ6G8
2024-11-26	The 92 Pācittiyas (4th Part, Āvasatha)	B0DP2T4MSQ
2024-11-26	The 92 Pācittiyas (5th Part, Ac)	B0DP3GNH5R
2024-11-27	The 92 Pācittiyas (6th Part, Su)	B0DP5SRSM9
2024-11-27	The 92 Pācittiyas (8th Part, Sa)	B0DP5325HQ
2024-11-28	The 4 Pāṭidesanīyas Assessment Book	B0DP7BMDCN
2024-11-28	The 92 Pācittiyas (8th Part - Sahad)	B0DP78HQT7
2024-11-28	The 92 Pācittiyas (9th Part, Ratana)	B0DP78PWPV
2024-11-29	The 75 Sekhiyas 1st Part, Parimaṇḍa	B0DPB6PK22
2024-11-29	The 75 Sekhiyas 3rd Part, Khambhaka	B0DPB8T8YS
2024-11-29	The 75 Sekhiyas 2nd Part, Ujuggāhika	B0DPBCT4HT
2024-11-30	Assessment Book for the 227 Rules of the Pātimokkha	B0DPCVX2QB
2025-01-16	Custodians of the Buddha’s Sacred Relics Vol-1	B0DT6C12R
2025-02-17	The Relic Wars: Faith, Deception, and the Fight for Truth	B0DDXYQ6Z6
2025-08-25	Breaking the Wheel: A Practical Handbook on Dependent Origination	B0FNRNQKYB
2025-09-03	Breaking Samudaya Ñāṇa: Cutting Craving's Root	B0FPRKNM4Y
2025-09-04	SEEING DUKKHASACCA ÑĀṆA: Penetrating the Truth of Suffering	B0FPQGC93L
2025-09-04	Realizing Nirodha Ñāṇa: The Cessation of Suffering	B0FPVV8N49
2025-09-05	Walking Magga Ñāṇa: The Path to Liberation	B0FPWZRL6G

2025-10-02	Buddhist Psychology & Philosophy for Modern Minds Vol-1	B0FTJZR19S
2025-10-03	Buddhist Psychology & Philosophy for Modern Minds Vol-2	B0FTSYB2NY

"The Abhidhamma is not theory, but a compass pointing toward peace."



BOOK 3 – The World Around Us: *Rūpa* (Matter)

Abstract: The third volume examines Rūpa, the material component of existence. It explains how matter arises through four great elements—solidity (earth)-cohesion (water), temperature (fire), and motion (alr)—and their derived forms such as the senses, gender, and life faculty. The book describes the interaction between mind and matter, showing how mental activity conditions physical phenomena and vice versa. Through accessible examples, readers learn to see the body as a natural process, not as self or possession. This volume provides a clear understanding of Buddhist material science and offers a meditative perspective on physical existence as impermanent and dependently arisen.

Books 1-3 → *explore what exists* — mind, mental factors, and matter.

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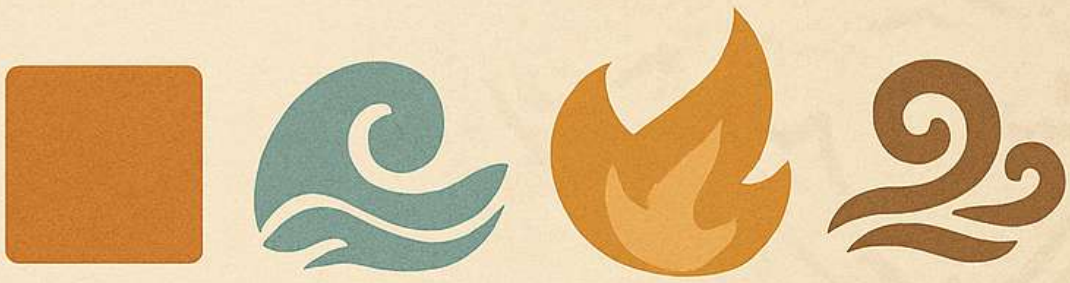

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